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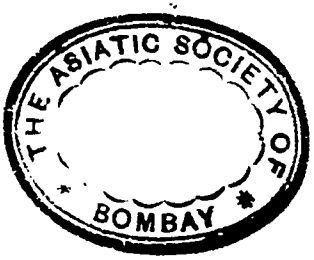

SOUTHEY'S LIFE OF

JOHN WESLEY

EDITED BY ARTHUR REYNOLDS, M.A

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"It will not be uninteresting to him (Southey) to know that the one or the other volume was the book more often in my hands than any other in my ragged book-regiment; and that to this work, and to the Life of R. Baxter, I was used to resort whenever sickness and languor made me feel the want of an old friend, of whose company I could never be tired."—S. T. COLERIDGE.

"The Life of Wesley will probably live. . . . It contains the only popular account of a most remarkable moral revolution, and of a man whose eloquence and acuteness might have made him eminent in literature, whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu, and who, whatever his errors may have been, devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and decision, to what he sincerely considered as the highest good of his species."

—LORD MACAULAY.

After the picture by George Romney, published June 1st, 1789.

John Wesley

THE LIFE OF

John Wesley

BY

ROBERT SOUTHEY

ABRIDGED, AND NEWLY
EDITED, WITH NOTES, ETC

London : **HUTCHINSON & CO.**
Paternoster Row

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE had no private sources of information in composing the present work. I am not conscious of having left anything undone for rendering the book as little incomplete as it was in my power to make it; and I have represented facts as I found them, with scrupulous fidelity, neither extenuating nor exaggerating anything. Of the opinion of the writer, the reader will judge according to his own; but whatever his judgment may be upon that point, he will acknowledge that, in a book of this kind, the opinions of an author are of less consequence than his industry, his accuracy, and his sense of duty.

[1820.]

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THE LIFE OF WESLEY

THE sect, or Society, as they would call themselves, of Methodists, has existed for the greater part of a century:[1] they have their seminaries and their hierarchy, their own regulations, their own manners, their own literature: in England they form a distinct people, an *imperium in imperio*: they are extending widely in America; and in both countries they number their annual increase by thousands. The history of their founder is little known in his native land beyond the limits of those who are termed the religious public; and on the Continent it is scarcely known at all. In some of his biographers the heart has been wanting to understand his worth, or the will to do it justice; others have not possessed freedom or strength of intellect to perceive wherein he was erroneous.

It has been remarked, with much complacency, by the Jesuits, that in the year when Luther began publicly to preach the abominable errors of his depraved mind, Loyola was converted to the service of the Lord, and commenced his war against the Devil: Providence, they say, having wisely appointed, that when so large a portion of Christendom was to be separated from the Catholic

[1] [This Life was published in 1820.—ED.].

Church by means of the great German heresiarch, the great Spanish saint should establish an order by which the Romish faith would be strenuously supported in Europe, and disseminated widely in the other parts of the world. Voltaire and Wesley were in like manner of the same generation; they were contemporaries through a longer course of time; and the influences which they exercised upon their age and upon posterity, have been not less remarkably opposed. While the one was scattering, with pestilent activity, the seeds of immorality and unbelief, the other, with equally unwearíable zeal, laboured in the cause of religious enthusiasm. The works of Voltaire have found their way wherever the French language is read; the disciples of Wesley wherever the English is spoken. The principles of the arch infidel were more rapid in their operation: he who aimed at no such evil as that which he contributed so greatly to bring about, was himself startled at their progress: in his latter days he trembled at the consequences which he then foresaw; and, indeed his remains had scarcely mouldered in the grave, before those consequences brought down the whole fabric of government in France, overturned her altars, subverted her throne, carried guilt, devastation, and misery into every part of his own country, and shook the rest of Europe like an earthquake. Wesley's doctrines, meantime, were slowly and gradually winning their way; but they advanced every succeeding year with accelerated force, and their effect must ultimately be more extensive, more powerful, and more permanent, for he has set mightier principles at work. Let it not, however be supposed that I would represent these eminent men, like agents of the good and evil principles, in all things

contrasted: the one was not all darkness, neither was the other all light.

The history of men who have been prime agents in those great moral and intellectual revolutions which from time to time take place among mankind, is not less important than that of statesmen and conquerors. If it has not to treat of actions wherewith the world has rung from side to side, it appeals to the higher part of our nature, and may perhaps excite more salutary feeling, a worthier interest, and wiser meditations. The Emperor Charles V., and his rival of France, appear at this day infinitely insignificant, if we compare them with Luther and Loyola; and there may come a time when the name of Wesley will be more generally known, and in remoter regions of the globe, than that of Frederic or of Catharine. For the works of such men survive them, and continue to operate, when nothing remains of worldly ambition but the memory of its vanity and its guilt.

CHAPTER I.

FAMILY OF THE WESLEYS.—WESLEY'S CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION.

THE founder of the Methodists was emphatically of a good family, in the sense wherein he himself would have used the term. Bartholomew Wesley, his great-grandfather, studied physic as well as divinity at the university, a practice not unusual at that time: he was ejected, by the Act of Uniformity, from the living of Allington, in Dorsetshire; and the medical knowledge which he had acquired from motives of charity, became

then the means of his support. John his son was educated at New Inn Hall, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth: he was distinguished not only for his piety and diligence, but for his progress in the oriental tongues, by which he attracted the particular notice and esteem of the then vice-chancellor, John Owen, a man whom the Calvinistic dissenters still regard as the greatest of their divines. If the government had continued in the Cromwell family, this patronage would have raised him to distinction. He obtained the living of Winterbourne Whitchurch, near Blandford, in his own county, and not having received Episcopal ordination, was ejected from it for nonconformity: being thus adrift, he thought of emigrating to Maryland, or to Surinam, where the English were then intending to settle a colony, but reflection and advice determined him to take his lot in his native land. There, by continuing to preach, he became obnoxious to the laws: he was driven from Weymouth, though he had formerly been much respected there; an order was made against his settlement in the town; the landlady who received him was fined twenty pounds, and a fine of five shillings a week was imposed upon him, to be levied by distress. He sought shelter successively at Bridgewater, Ilminster, and Taunton, and during three months is said to have met much kindness both for himself and his numerous family, till a benevolent friend to him and the cause offered him a good house, rent free, in the village of Preston. This place was so near Weymouth, that the Five Miles Act compelled him to withdraw from it, and leave his family there for awhile. He became an occasional conformist, yet took every opportunity to exercise his own ministry, as he thought himself in

conscience bound. This made him always in danger; he was repeatedly apprehended, and was four times imprisoned: his spirits were broken by affliction, and he died at the early age of three or four and thirty. He had at that time a small congregation at Poole; but his family seem to have remained at Preston, for in that village he died; and such was the spirit of those days, that the vicar would not suffer him to be buried in the church. Bartholomew was then living; but the loss of this, his only son, brought his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

This John Wesley married a woman of good stock, niece to Thomas Fuller, the Church historian, a man not more remarkable for wit and quaintness, than for the felicity with which he clothed fine thoughts in beautiful language. She survived him through some forty years of poverty and destitution. They had a large family; but only two seem to have grown up—Matthew and Samuel. Samuel, the younger, was only eight or nine years old at the time of his father's death. The former was bred to the medical profession; the latter received the first part of his education at the Free School of Dorchester, under Mr. Henry Dolling, till he was almost fit for the university, and was then, without any solicitation on his mother's part, taken notice of by some Dissenters, and sent by them to London, in order to his being entered at one of their private academies, and so for their ministry. The circumstances of the father's life and sufferings, which have given him a place among the confessors of the Nonconformists, were likely to influence the opinions of the son; but happening to fall in with bigoted and ferocious men, he saw the worst part of the dissenting character. Their defence of the execution of King Charles offended him, and he was at

once shocked and disgusted by their Calf's Head Club; so much so, that he separated from them, and, because of their intolerance, joined the Church which had persecuted his father. This conduct, which was the result of feeling, was approved by his ripe judgment, and Samuel Wesley continued through life a zealous churchman. The feeling which urged him to this step must have been very powerful, and no common spirit was required to bear him through the difficulties which he brought upon himself; for by withdrawing from the dissenting academy at which he had been placed, he so far offended his friends, that they lent him no farther support, and in the latter years of Charles II. there was little disposition to encourage proselytes who joined a church which the reigning family was secretly labouring to subvert. But Samuel Wesley was made of good mould: he knew and could depend upon himself: he walked to Oxford, entered himself at Exeter College as a poor scholar, and began his studies there with no larger a fund than two pounds sixteen shillings, and no prospect of any future supply. From that time, till he graduated, a single crown was all the assistance he received from his friends. He composed exercises for those who had more money than learning; and he gave instruction to those who wished to profit by his lessons; and thus by great industry, and great frugality, he not only supported himself, but had accumulated the sum of ten pounds fifteen shillings, when he went to London to be ordained. Having served a curacy there one year, and as chaplain during another on board a king's ship, he settled upon a curacy in the metropolis, and married Susannah, daughter of Dr. Annesley, one of the ejected ministers.

No man was ever more suitably mated than the elder Wesley. The wife whom he chose was, like himself, the child of a man eminent among the Nonconformists, and, like himself, in early youth she had chosen her own path: she had examined the controversy between the Dissenters and the Church of England with conscientious diligence, and satisfied herself that the schismatics were in the wrong. The dispute, it must be remembered, related wholly to discipline; but her enquiries had not stopped there, and she had reasoned herself into Socinianism, from which she was reclaimed by her husband. She was an admirable woman, of highly-improved mind, and of a strong and masculine understanding, an obedient wife, an exemplary mother, a fervent Christian. The marriage was blessed in all its circumstances: it was contracted in the prime of their youth: it was fruitful; and death did not divide them till they were both full of days. They had no less than nineteen children; but only three sons and three daughters seem to have grown up; and it is probably to the loss of the others that the father refers in one of his letters, where he says, that he had suffered things more grievous than death. The manner in which these children were taught to read is remarkable: the mother never began with them till they were five years old, and then she made them learn the alphabet perfectly in one day: on the next they were put to spell and to read one line, and then a verse, never leaving it till they were perfect in the lesson.

Mr. Wesley soon attacted notice by his ability and his erudition. Talents found their way into public less readily in that age than in the present; and therefore, when they appeared, they obtained attention the sooner.

He was thought capable of forwarding the plans of James II. with regard to religion; and preferment was promised him if he would preach in behalf of the king's measures. But instead of reading the king's declaration as he was required, and although surrounded with courtiers, soldiers, and informers, he preached boldly against the designs of the court, taking for his text the pointed language of the prophet Daniel, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king! But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." When the Revolution was effected, Mr. Wesley was the first who wrote in its defence: he dedicated the work to Queen Mary, and was rewarded for it with the living of Epworth, in Lincolnshire. It is said that if the queen had lived longer he would have obtained more preferment. His wife differed from him in opinion concerning the Revolution; but as she understood the duty and the wisdom of obedience, she did not express her dissent; and he discovered it a year only before King William died, by observing that she did not say amen to the prayers for him. Instead of imitating her forbearance, he questioned her upon the subject, and when she told him she did not believe the Prince of Orange was king, he vowed never again to cohabit with her till she did. In pursuance of this unwarrantable vow, he immediately took horse and rode away; nor did she hear of him again, till the death of the king, about twelve months afterwards, released him from his rash and criminal engagement. John was their first child after this separation.

In the reign of Queen Anne, Mr. Wesley's prospects appeared to brighten. A poem which he published upon the battle of Blenheim pleased the Duke of Marlborough, and the author was rewarded with the chaplainship of a regiment. A farther and better reward was held out to his expectations; and he was invited to London by a nobleman who promised to procure him a prebend. This the Dissenters, with whom he was engaged in controversy, were at that time powerful enough to prevent. No enmity is so envenomed as that of religious faction. The Dissenters hated Mr. Wesley cordially, because they looked upon him as one who, having been born in their service, had cast off his allegiance. They intercepted his preferment: "they worked him out of his chaplainship, and brought several other very severe sufferings upon him and his family." During the subsequent reign the small living of Wroote was given him, in the same county with Epworth.

John, his second son, the founder of the Methodists, was born at Epworth on June 17th, 1703. Epworth is a market-town in the Lindsay division of Lincolnshire, irregularly built, and containing at that time in its parish about two thousand persons. The inhabitants are chiefly employed in the culture and preparation of hemp and flax, in spinning these articles, and in the manufactory of sacking and bagging. Mr. Wesley found his parishioners in a profligate state; and the zeal with which he discharged his duty in admonishing them of their sins, excited a spirit of diabolical hatred in those whom it failed to reclaim. Some of these wretches twice attempted to set his house on fire, without success: they succeeded in a third attempt. At midnight some pieces of burning wood fell from the roof upon the bed

in which one of the children lay, and burnt her feet. Before she could give the alarm, Mr. Wesley was roused by a cry of fire from the street: little imagining that it was in his own house, he opened the door, and found it full of smoke, and that the roof was already burnt through. His wife being ill at the time, slept apart from him, and in a separate room. Bidding her and the two eldest girls rise and shift for their lives, he burst open the nursery door, where the maid was sleeping with five children. She snatched up the youngest, and bade the others follow her; the three elder did so, but John, who was then six years old, was not awakened by all this, and in the alarm and confusion he was forgotten. By the time they reached the hall, the flames had spread everywhere around them, and Mr. Wesley then found the keys of the house-door were above stairs. He ran and recovered them, a minute before the staircase took fire. When the door was opened, a strong north-west wind drove in the flames with such violence from the side of the house, that it was impossible to stand against them. Some of the children got through the windows, and others through a little door into the garden. Mrs. Wesley could not reach the garden door, and was not in a condition to climb to the windows: after three times attempting to face the flames, and shrinking as often from the force, she besought Christ to preserve her, if it was His will, from that dreadful death: she then, to use her own expression, *waded* through the fire, and escaped into the street naked as she was, with some slight scorching of the hands and face. At this time John, who had not been remembered till that moment, was heard crying in the nursery. The father ran to the stairs, but they

were so nearly consumed, they they could not bear his weight, and being utterly in despair, he fell upon his knees in the hall, and in agony commended the soul of the child to God. John had been awakened by the light, and thinking it was day, called to the maid to take him up; but as no one answered, he opened the curtains, and saw streaks of fire upon the top of the room. He ran to the door, and finding it impossible to escape that way, climbed upon a chest which stood near the window, and he was then seen from the yard. There was no time for procuring a ladder, but it was happily a low house: one man was hoisted upon the shoulders of another, and could then reach the window, so as to take him out. A moment later and it would have been too late: the whole roof fell in, and had it not fallen inward, they must all have been crushed together. When the child was carried out to the house where his parents were, the father cried out, "Come, neighbours, let us kneel down: let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go, I am rich enough." John Wesley remembered this providential deliverance through life with the deepest gratitude. In reference to it he had a house in flames engraved as an emblem under one of his portraits, with these words for the motto, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?"

The third son, Charles, the zealous and able associate of his brother in future labours, was at this time scarcely two months old. The circumstances of his birth are remarkable. His mother was delivered of him before the due time, and the child appeared dead rather than alive, neither crying nor opening its eyes. In this state it was kept, wrapped up in soft wool, till the time when

he should have been born according to the usual course of nature, and then, it is said, he opened his eyes and made himself heard.

Mr. Wesley usually attended the sittings of Convocation: such attendance, according to his principles, was a part of his duty, and he performed it at an expense of money which he could ill spare from the necessities of so large a family, and at a cost of time which was injurious to his parish. During these absences, as there was no afternoon service at Epworth, Mrs. Wesley prayed with her own family on Sunday evenings, read a sermon, and engaged afterwards in religious conversation. Some of the parishioners who came in accidentally were not excluded; and she did not think it proper that their presence should interrupt the duty of the hour. Induced by the report which these persons made, others requested permission to attend; and in this manner from thirty to forty persons usually assembled. After this had continued some time, she happened to find an account of the Danish missionaries in her husband's study, and was much impressed by the perusal. The book strengthened her desire of doing good: she chose "the best and most awakening sermons," and spake with more freedom, more warmth, more affection to the neighbours who attended her at evening prayers: their numbers increased in consequence, for she did not think it right to deny any who asked admittance. More persons came at length than the apartment could hold; and the thing was represented to her husband in such a manner that he wrote to her, objecting to her conduct, because, he said, "it looked particular" because of her sex, and because he was at that time in a public station and character, which rendered it the more

necessary that she should do nothing to attract censure: and he recommended that some other person should read for her. She began her reply by heartily thanking him for dealing so plainly and faithfully with her in a matter of no common concern. "As to its *looking particular*," she said, "I grant it does; and so does almost everything that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God, or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of a pulpit or in the way of common conversation; because in our corrupt age the utmost care and diligence has been used to banish all discourse of God, or spiritual concerns, out of society, as if religion were never to appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of confessing ourselves to be Christians." To the objection on account of her sex she answered, that as she was a woman, so was she also mistress of a large family; and though the superior charge lay upon him as their head and minister, yet, in his absence, she could not but look upon every soul which he had left under her care as a talent committed to her under a trust by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth. "If," she added, "I am unfaithful to Him or to you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto Him, when He shall command me to render an account of my stewardship?" The objections which arose from his own station and character she left entirely to his own judgment. Why any person should reflect upon him, because his wife endeavoured to draw people to church, and restrain them, by reading and other persuasions, from profaning the sabbath, she could not conceive; and if any were mad enough to do so, she hoped he would not regard it. "For my own part,'

she says, "I value no censure on this account: I have long since shook hands with the world; and I heartily wish I had never given them more reason to speak against me." As to the proposal of letting some other person read for her, she thought her husband had not considered what a people they were; not a man among them could read a sermon without spelling a good part of it, and how would that edify the rest? And none of her own family had voices strong enough to be heard by so many.

While Mrs. Wesley thus vindicated herself in a manner which she thought must prove convincing to her husband, as well as to her own calm judgment, the curate of Epworth (a man who seems to have been entitled to very little respect) wrote to Mr. Wesley in a very different strain, complaining that a conventicle was held in his house. The name was well chosen to alarm so high a churchman; and his second letter declared a decided disapprobation of these meetings, to which he had made no serious objections before. She did not reply to this till some days had elapsed, for she deemed it necessary that both should take some time to consider before her husband finally determined in a matter which she felt to be of great importance. She expressed her astonishment that any effect upon his opinions, much more any change in them, should be produced by the senseless clamour of two or three of the worst in his parish; and she represented to him the good which had been done by inducing a much more frequent and regular attendance at church, and reforming the general habits of the people; and the evil which would result from discontinuing such meetings, especially by the prejudices which it would excite against the

curate, in those persons who were sensible that they derived benefit from the religious opportunities, which would thus be taken away through his interference. After stating these things clearly and judiciously, she concluded thus, in reference to her own duty as a wife: "If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you *desire* me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience; but send me your *positive command*, in such full and express terms as may absolve me from guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Wesley made no farther objections; and thoroughly respecting, as he did, the principles and the understanding of his wife, he was perhaps ashamed that the representations of meaner minds should have prejudiced him against her conduct. John and Charles were at this time under their mother's care: she devoted such a proportion of time as she could afford, to discourse with each child by itself on one night of the week, upon the duties and the hopes of Christianity: and it may well be believed that these circumstances of their childhood had no inconsiderable influence upon their proceedings when they became the founders and directors of a new community of Christians. John's providential deliverance from the fire had profoundly impressed his mother, as it did himself, throughout the whole of his after life. Among the private meditations which were found among her papers, was one written out long after that event, in which she expressed in prayer her intention to be *more particularly* careful of the soul of this child, which God had so mercifully provided for, that she might

instil into him the principles of true religion and virtue; —"Lord," she said, "give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success." The peculiar care which was thus taken of his religious education, the habitual and fervent piety of both his parents, and his own surprising preservation, at an age when he was perfectly capable of remembering all the circumstances, combined to foster in the child that disposition, which afterwards developed itself with such force, and produced such important effects.

Talents of no ordinary kind, as well as a devotional temper, were hereditary in this remarkable family. Samuel, the elder brother, who was eleven years older than John, could not speak at all till he was more than four years old, and consequently was thought to be deficient in his faculties: but it seems as if the child had been laying up stores in secret till that time, for one day when some question was proposed to another person concerning him, he answered it himself in a manner which astonished all who heard him, and from that hour he continued to speak without difficulty. He distinguished himself first at Westminster, and afterwards at Christ Church, Oxford, by his classical attainments. From Christ Church he returned to Westminster as an usher, and then took orders, under the patronage of Atterbury. But he regarded Atterbury more as a friend than a patron, and holding the same political opinions, he attracted the resentment of the ministers, by assailing them with epigrams and satires. On this account, when the situation of under-master became vacant, and he was proposed as a man eminently qualified to fill it, by experience, ability, and character, the appointment was refused, upon the irrelevant objection that he was a

married man. Charles was placed under him at Westminster, and going through the college in like manner, was also elected to Christ Church. John was educated at the Charterhouse.

While John was at school, certain disturbances occurred in his father's house, so unaccountable, that every person by whom they were witnessed believed them to be supernatural. At the latter end of the year 1715, the maid-servant was terrified by hearing at the dining-room door several dismal groans, as of a person at the point of death. The family gave little heed to her story, and endeavoured to laugh her out of her fears; but a few nights afterward they began to hear strange knockings, usually three or four at a time, in different parts of the house: every person heard these noises except Mr. Wesley himself, and as, according to vulgar opinion, such sounds were not audible by the individual to whom they foreboded evil, they refrained from telling him, lest he should suppose that it betokened his own death, as they indeed all apprehended. At length, however, the disturbance became so great and so frequent, that few or none of the family durst be alone, and Mrs. Wesley thought it better to inform her husband; for it was not possible that the matter could long be concealed from him; and moreover, as she says, she was minded he should speak to it. The noises were now various as well as strange, loud rumblings above stairs or below, a clatter among a number of bottles, as if they had all at once been dashed to pieces, footsteps as of a man going up and down stairs at all hours of the night, sounds like that of dancing in an empty room the door of which was locked, gobbling like a

turkey-cock, but most frequently a knocking about the beds at night, and in different parts of the house. Mrs. Wesley would at first have persuaded the children and servants that it was occasioned by rats within doors, and mischievous persons without, and her husband had recourse to the same ready solution: or some of his daughters, he supposed, sat up late and made a noise; and a hint that their lovers might have something to do with the mystery, made the young ladies heartily hope he might soon be convinced that there was more in the matter than he was disposed to believe. In this they were not disappointed, for on the next night, a little after midnight, he was awakened by nine loud and distinct knocks, which seemed to be in the next room, with a pause at every third stroke. He rose and went to see if he could discover the cause, but could perceive nothing; still he thought it might be some person out of doors, and relied upon a stout mastiff to rid them of this nuisance. But the dog, which upon the first disturbance had barked violently, was ever afterwards cowed by it, and seeming more terrified than any of the children, came whining himself to his master and mistress, as if to seek protection in a human presence. And when the man-servant, Robin Brown, took the mastiff at night into his room, to be at once a guard and a companion, as soon as the latch began to jar as usual, the dog crept into bed, and barked and howled so as to alarm the house.

The fears of the family for Mr. Wesley's life being removed as soon as he had heard the mysterious noises, they began to apprehend that one of the sons had met with a violent death, and more particularly Samuel, the eldest. The father, therefore, one night after several

deep groans had been heard, adjured it to speak if it had power, and tell him why it troubled the house; and upon this three distinct knockings were made. He then questioned it if it were Samuel his son, bidding it, if it were, and could not speak, to knock again: but to their great comfort there was no farther knocking that night; and when they heard that Samuel and the two boys were safe and well, the visitations of the goblin became rather a matter of curiosity and amusement than of alarm. Emilia gave it the name of old Jeffery, and by this name he was now known as a harmless, though by no means an agreeable inmate of the parsonage. Jeffery was not a malicious goblin, but he was easily offended. Before Mrs. Wesley was satisfied that there was something supernatural in the noises, she recollected that one of her neighbours had frightened the rats from his dwelling by blowing a horn there: the horn, therefore, was borrowed and blown stoutly about the house for half a day, greatly against the judgment of one of the sisters, who maintained that if it was anything supernatural it would certainly be very angry and more troublesome. Her opinion was verified by the event: Jeffery had never till then begun his operations during the day: from that time he came by day as well as by night, and was louder than before. And he never entered Mr. Wesley's study till the owner one day rebuked him sharply, called him a deaf and dumb devil, and bade him cease to disturb the innocent children, and come to him in his study, if he had anything to say. This was a sort of defiance, and Jeffery therefore took him at his word. No other person in the family ever felt the goblin, but Mr. Wesley was thrice pushed by it with considerable force.

So he himself relates, and his evidence is clear and distinct. He says also, that once or twice when he spoke to it, he heard two or three feeble squeaks, a little louder than the chirping of a bird, but not like the noise of rats. What is said of an actual appearance is not so well confirmed. Mrs. Wesley thought she saw something run from under the bed, and thought it most like a badger, but she could not well say of what shape; and the man saw something like a white rabbit, which came from behind the oven, with its ears flat upon the neck, and its little scut standing straight up. A shadow may possibly explain the first of these appearances; the other may be imputed to that proneness which ignorant persons so commonly evince to exaggerate in all uncommon cases. These circumstances, therefore, though apparently silly in themselves, in no degree invalidate the other parts of the story, which rest upon the concurrent testimony of many intelligent witnesses. The door was once violently pushed against Emilia, when there was no person on the outside; the latches were frequently lifted up; the windows clattered always before Jeffery entered a room, and whatever iron or brass was there, rung and jarred exceedingly. It was observed also that the wind commonly rose after any of his noises, and increased with it, and whistled loudly around the house. Mr. Wesley's trencher (for it was before our potteries had pushed their ware into every village throughout the kingdom) danced one day upon the table, to his no small amazement; and the handle of Robin's hand-mill, at another time, was turned round with great swiftness: unluckily Robin had just done grinding: nothing vexed him, he said, but that the mill was empty; if there had been corn in it, Jeffery might

have ground his heart out before he would have disturbed him. It was plainly a Jacobite goblin, and seldom suffered Mr. Wesley to pray for the king and the Prince of Wales without disturbing the family prayers. Mr. Wesley was sore upon this subject, and became angry, and therefore repeated the prayer. But when Samuel was informed of this, his remark was, "As to the devil's being an enemy to King George, were I the king myself, I should rather Old Nick should be my enemy than my friend." The children were the only persons who were distressed by these visitations: the manner in which they were affected is remarkable: when the noises began they appeared to be frightened in their sleep, a sweat came over them, and they panted and trembled till the disturbance was so loud as to awaken them. Before it ceased, the family had become quite accustomed to it, and were tired with hearing or speaking of it. "Send me some news," said one of the sisters to her brother Samuel, "for we are secluded from the sight or hearing of any versal thing, except Jeffery."

An author who in this age relates such a story, and treats it as not utterly incredible and absurd, must expect to be ridiculed; but the testimony upon which it rests is far too strong to be set aside because of the strangeness of the relation. The letters which passed at the time between Samuel Wesley and the family at Epworth, the journal which Mr. Wesley kept of these remarkable transactions, and the evidence concerning them which John afterwards collected, fell into the hands of Dr. Priestley, and were published by him as being "perhaps the best authenticated and best told story of the kind that is any where extant." He observes

in favour of the story, "that all the parties seem to have been sufficiently void of fear, and also free from credulity, except the general belief that such things were supernatural." But he argues, that where no good end was to be answered, we may safely conclude that no miracle was wrought; and he supposes, as the most probable solution, that it was a trick of the servants, assisted by some of the neighbours, for the sake of amusing themselves and puzzling the family. In reply to this it may safely be asserted, that many of the circumstances cannot be explained by any such supposition, nor by any legerdemain, nor by ventriloquism, nor by any secret of acoustics. The former argument would be valid, if the term miracle were applicable to the case; but by miracle Dr. Priestley evidently intends a manifestation of divine power, and in the present instance no such manifestation is supposed, any more than in the appearance of a departed spirit. Such things may be preternatural and yet not miraculous: they may be not in the ordinary course of nature, and yet imply no alterations of its laws. And with regard to the good end which they may be supposed to answer, it would be end sufficient if sometimes one of those unhappy persons, who looking through the dim glass of infidelity, see nothing beyond this life, and the narrow sphere of mortal existence, should, from the well-established truth of one such story (trifling and objectless as it might otherwise appear), be led to a conclusion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy.

John suffered at the Charterhouse under the tyranny which the elder boys were permitted to exercise. This evil at one time existed very generally in English

schools, through the culpable negligence of the masters; and perhaps may still continue to exist, though if a system were designed for cultivating the worst dispositions of human nature, it could not more effectually answer the purpose. The boys of the higher forms of the Charterhouse were then in the practice of taking their portion of meat from the younger ones, by the law of the strongest; and during great part of the time that Wesley remained there, a small daily portion of bread was his only food. Those theoretical physicians who recommend spare diet for the human animal, might appeal with triumph to the length of days which he attained, and the elastic constitution which he enjoyed. He himself imputed this blessing, in great measure, to the strict obedience with which he performed an injunction of his father's, that he should run round the Charterhouse garden three times every morning. Here, for his quietness, regularity, and application, he became a favourite with the master, Dr. Walker; and through life he retained so great a predilection for the place, that on his annual visit to London he made it a custom to walk through the scene of his boyhood. To most men every year would render a pilgrimage of this kind more painful than the last; but Wesley seems never to have looked back with melancholy upon the days that were gone; earthly regrets of this kind could find no room in one who was continually pressing onward to the goal.

At the age of seventeen he was removed from the Charterhouse to Christ Church, Oxford.

CHAPTER II.

WESLEY AT OXFORD.

BEFORE Wesley went to the university, he had acquired some knowledge of Hebrew under his brother Samuel's tuition. At college he continued his studies with all diligence, and was noticed there for his attainments, and especially for his skill in logic, by which he frequently put to silence those who contended with him in after-life. No man, indeed, was ever more dexterous in the art of reasoning. A charge was once brought against him that he delighted to perplex his opponents by his expertness in sophistry; he repelled it with indignation: "It has been my first care," said he, "to see that my cause was good, and never, either in jest or earnest, to defend the wrong side of a question: and shame on me if I cannot defend the right after so much practice, and after having been so early accustomed to separate truth from falsehood, how artfully soever they are twisted together." Like his father, and both his brothers, he was no inexpert versifier in his youth: this, however, was a talent which he forbore to use, when ascetic opinions began to influence him,—and the honour of being the sweet singer of Methodism was reserved for his brother Charles.

While he was an undergraduate, his manners were free and cheerful; and that activity of disposition which bore him afterward through such uninterrupted labour, displayed itself in wit and vivacity. But when the time of life arrived at which he might have taken orders, he, who was not a man to act lightly upon any occasion,

and least of all upon so solemn a one, began to reflect seriously upon the importance of the priestly office, and to feel some scruples concerning the motives by which the person ought to be influenced who determines to take upon himself so awful a charge. These scruples he communicated to his father, who answered them sensibly; but agreed with him in not liking "a callow clergyman"; and hinting that he thought it too soon for him to be ordained, exhorted him to work while he could. The letter was written with a trembling pen: "You see," said the old man, "Time has shaken me by the hand, and Death is but a little way behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left, and I bless God for them." The mother, however, was of opinion, that the sooner he entered into deacon's orders the better, because it might be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity. "And now," said she, "in good earnest resolve to make religion the business of your life: for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary; all things beside are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy."

In conformity to this advice he applied himself closely to theological studies: his devotional feelings thus fostered, soon acquired the predominance in a frame of mind like his, and he now became desirous of entering upon his ministerial career. The father understanding

this, judged it advisable that he should be ordained in the ensuing summer; "but, in the first place," said he, "if you love yourself or me, pray heartily." Two books which he read in the course of this preparation laid strong hold upon him. The first was the famous treatise *De Imitatione Christi*, commonly ascribed upon insufficient and disputed evidence to Thomas à Kempis. The view which is taken in that work of human life and of Christian duties revolted him at first. Upon this, as upon all other subjects, he consulted his parents as his natural and best counsellors, and represented it with humility as a misfortune that he differed from the writer in some main points. "I cannot think," said he, "that when God sent us into the world, He had irreversibly decreed that we should be perpetually miserable in it. If our taking up the Cross imply our bidding adieu to all joy and satisfaction, how is it reconcilable with what Solomon expressly affirms of religion, that *her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*?" Another of his tenets is, that mirth or pleasure is useless, if not sinful; and that nothing is an affliction to a good man,—that he ought to thank God even for sending him misery. "This, in my opinion," says Wesley, "is contrary to God's design in afflicting us; for though He chasteneth those whom He loveth, yet it is in order to humble them." His mother agreed with him that the author of this treatise had more zeal than knowledge, and was one of those men who would unnecessarily strew the way of life with thorns. "Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure," she said, "take this rule:—whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of

spiritual things;—in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself." Well might Wesley consult upon such questions a mother who was capable of reasoning and writing thus. His father expressed a different opinion: "All men," he said, "were apt to verge toward extremes, but mortification was still an indispensable Christian duty. If the young man will *rejoice in his youth*, let him take care that his joys be innocent; and in order to this, remember, that *for all these things* God will bring him into judgment." The book had been his "great and old companion," and he thought that "making some grains of allowance, it might be read to great advantage, —nay, that it was almost impossible to peruse it seriously without admiring, and in some measure imitating its heroic strains of humility, piety, and devotion." But he referred him to his mother, saying, that "she had leïsure to boult the matter to the bran." This reference to the judgment of a woman upon such a subject will appear less extraordinary, if it be remembered that the practice of giving girls a learned education, which began in England with the Reformation, had not been laid aside in Mrs. Wesley's youth—that she understood Greek and Latin, and that her early studies had been directed to theology. Her attainments, however, had not made her pedantic; neither had her talents, and the deference which was paid to them by her husband and her children, rendered her in any degree presumptuous. She speaks of herself in this correspondence as being infirm and slow of understanding; but expresses the delight which it gave her to correspond with her son upon such subjects.

The treatise *De Imitatione* appears to have offended Wesley's reason, as well as the instincts of hilarity and youth. But the impression which this writer (whoever he be) failed to make, was produced by the work of a far more powerful intellect, and an imagination infinitely more fervent—Jeremy Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. He had been trained up in religious habits; and when his religious feelings were once called into action, they soon became pre-eminent above all others. That part in particular of this splendid work which relates to purity of intention, affected him exceedingly. "Instantly," he says, "I resolved to dedicate *all* my life to God,—*all* my thoughts and words and actions,—being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that *every part* of my life (not *some* only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself—that is, in effect to the Devil." The *Imitation*, which he had found repulsive at first, appeared so no longer now: Bishop Taylor had prepared the way for the ascetic author, and he began to find in the perusal sensible comfort, such as he was an utter stranger to before. His father, who had once thought him wanting in theopathy, and probably for that reason had advised him to delay his ordination, perceived the change with joy. "God fit you for your great work!" he said to him. "Fast, watch, and pray; believe, love, endure, and be happy, towards which you shall never want the most ardent prayers of your affectionate father." He removed some scruples which his son expressed concerning the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed—that creed of which Tillotson wished the Church of England were "well rid." "Their point," he said, "was levelled only against obstinate heretics; and a distinction was undoubtedly to be made between

what is wilful and what is in some measure involuntary. God certainly will make a difference, and to Him it must be left; our business is to keep to the rule which He has given us. As to the main of the cause," he continues, "the best way to deal with our adversaries is to turn the war and their own vaunted arms against them. From balancing the schemes it will appear, that there are many irreconcilable absurdities and contradictions in theirs, but none such (though, indeed, some difficulties) in ours. They can never prove a contradiction in our Three and One, unless we affirm them to be so in the same respect, which every child knows we do not. But we can prove there is one in a creature's being a creator, which they assert of our Lord."

It is curious to observe the opinions of the young theologian at this time upon some of those topics, whereon he enlarged so copiously, and acted so decisively in after-life. Jeremy Taylor had remarked that we ought, "in some sense or other, to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come." The duty of absolute humility Wesley at once acknowledged; but he denied that this comparative humility, as he called it, was in our power; it could not be reasonable, or sincere, and therefore it could not be a virtue. The bishop had affirmed, that we know not whether God has forgiven us. Wesley could not assent to this position. "If," said he, "we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, which we will not do unless we are regenerate, certainly we *must* be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then undoubtedly in this life we are of all men most miserable. God deliver

us from such a fearful expectation! Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation, and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble? who can be saved? That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins, as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so if we apostatise; and I am not satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance, till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded we may know if we are *now* in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavours, and we are surely able to judge of our own sincerity." He was startled at that part of our articles which bears a Calvinistic appearance. "As I understand faith," said he, "to be an assent to any truth upon rational grounds, I do not think it possible, without perjury, to swear I believe anything, unless I have reasonable grounds for my persuasion. Now, that which contradicts reason cannot be said to stand upon reasonable grounds, and such, undoubtedly, is every proposition which is incompatible with the divine justice or mercy. What then shall I say of predestination? If it was inevitably decreed from eternity that a determinate part of mankind should be saved, and none beside them, a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it. How is this consistent with either the divine justice or mercy? Is it merciful to ordain a creature to everlasting misery? Is it just to punish man for crimes which he could not but commit? That God should be the author of sin and injustice, which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion, is a contradiction to the clearest ideas we have of the divine nature and

perfections." His mother, to whom these feelings were imparted, agreed with him that the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination was shocking, and ought utterly to be abhorred. The Church doctrine, she argued, if it were properly understood, in no wise derogated from God's free grace, nor impaired the liberty of man; for there could be no more reason to suppose that the prescience of God is the cause why so many finally perish, than that our knowing the sun will rise to-morrow is the cause of its rising. But she wondered why men would amuse themselves with searching into the decrees of God, which no human heart could fathom, and not rather employ their time and powers in making their own election sure. "Such studies," she said, "tended more to confound than to inform the understanding; but as he had entered upon it, if her thoughts did not satisfy him, he had better consult his father, who was surely much better qualified for a casuist than herself."

The course of these studies, aided also by his meeting, for the first time, with a religious friend, produced a great change in Wesley's frame of mind. He began to alter the whole form of his conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. He communicated every week, and began to pray for that inward holiness, of the necessity of which Bishop Taylor had convinced him, and to aim at it with his utmost endeavours. Thus prepared in heart as well as in knowledge, he was ordained in the autumn of the year 1725 by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford, and afterwards primate. In the ensuing spring he offered himself for a fellowship at Lincoln College. Even in college elections there is play enough for evil passions, and too much licence allowed them. Though Wesley was not yet eccentric in his

habits of life, the strictness of his religious principles was sufficiently remarkable to afford subject for satire; and his opponents hoped to prevent his success by making him ridiculous. Upon this occasion his father told him it was a callow virtue that could not bear being laughed at. His mother encouraged him in a different manner. "If," said she, "it be a weak virtue that cannot bear being laughed at, I am sure it is a strong and well-confirmed virtue that can stand the test of a brisk buffoonery. Many people, though well inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, merely because they could not bear raillery. I would therefore advise those who are in the beginning of a Christian course, to shun the company of profane wits, as they would the plague or poverty; and never to contract an intimacy with any but such as have a good sense of religion." Notwithstanding this kind of opposition, he attained the object in view, and was elected fellow in March, 1726, having been much indebted to his brother Samuel's influence, and to the good-will of the rector of the college, Dr. Morley. This was a great joy to his father, who was now far advanced in the vale of years. In writing to congratulate him he says, "What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God knows: *sed passi graviora.*—Wherever I am, my Jack is Fellow of Lincoln."

This removal enabled him to rid himself of all unsympathising acquaintance, in a manner which he related, sixty years afterwards, in his sermon on leaving the world. "When it pleased God," he says, "to give me a settled resolution to be, not a nominal, but a real Christian, (being then about twenty-two years of age,) my acquaintance were as ignorant of God as myself.

But there was this difference: I knew my own ignorance; they did not know theirs. I faintly endeavoured to help them, but in vain. Meantime I found, by sad experience, that even their harmless conversation, so called, damped all my good resolutions. But how to get rid of them was the question which I revolved in my mind again and again. I saw no possible way, unless it should please God to remove me to another college. He did so, in a manner utterly contrary to all human probability. I was elected fellow of a college, where I knew not one person. I foresaw abundance of people would come to see me, either out of friendship, civility, or curiosity, and that I should have offers of acquaintance new and old: but I had now fixed my plan. Entering now, as it were, into a new world, I resolved to have no acquaintance by chance, but by choice, and to choose such only as I had reason to believe would help me on my way to heaven. In consequence of this, I narrowly observed the temper and behaviour of all that visited me. I saw no reason to think that the greater part of these truly loved or feared God. Such acquaintance, therefore, I did not choose: I could not expect they would do me any good. Therefore, when any of these came, I behaved as courteously as I could: but to the question, 'When will you come to see me?' I returned no answer. When they had come a few times, and found I still declined returning the visit, I saw them no more. And I bless God," he adds, "this has been my invariable rule for about threescore years. I knew many reflections would follow; but that did not move me, as I knew full well it was my calling to go *through evil report and good report.*"

From this time Wesley began to keep a diary, according to a practice which at one time was very general among persons religiously disposed. To this practice the world owes some valuable materials for history as well as individual biography; but perhaps no person has, in this manner, conveyed so lively a picture of himself as Wesley. During a most restless life of incessant occupation, he found time to register not only his proceedings, but his thoughts, his studies, and his occasional remarks upon men and books, and not unfrequently upon miscellaneous subjects, with a vivacity which characterised him to the last. Eight months after his election to a fellowship, he was appointed Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes. At that time disputations were held six times a week at Lincoln College; and however the students may have profited by them, they were of singular use to the moderator. "I could not avoid," he says, "acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing; and especially in discerning and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay, and it flew open in a moment." He now formed for himself a scheme of studies, resolving not to vary from it for some years at least. Mondays and Tuesdays were allotted for the classics; Wednesdays, to logic and ethics; Thursdays, to Hebrew and Arabic; Fridays, to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturdays, to oratory and poetry, but chiefly to composition in those arts; and the Sabbath, to divinity. It

appears by his diary, also, that he gave great attention to mathematics. But he had come to that conclusion, at which, sooner or later, every studious man must arrive, —that life is not long enough for the attainment of general knowledge, and that there are many things of which the most learned must content themselves to be ignorant. He says to his mother, "I am perfectly come over to your opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. Curiosity, indeed, might be a sufficient plea for our laying out some time upon them, if we had half a dozen centuries of lives to come; but methinks it is great ill husbandry to spend a considerable part of the small pittance now allowed us, in what makes us neither a quick nor a sure return." Full of business as he now was, he found time for writing, by rising an hour earlier in the morning, and going into company an hour later in the evening.

As his religious feelings grew upon him, that state of mind came on which led the enthusiasts of early ages into the wilderness. He began to think that such society as that wherein he was placed, hindered his progress in spiritual things. He thought it "the settled temper of his soul," that he should, for some time at least, prefer such a retirement as might seclude him from all the world, where he might confirm in himself those habits which he thought best, before the flexibility of youth should be over. A school was proposed to him, with a good salary annexed to it, in one of the Yorkshire dales. Some persons, who knew the place, gave him what they thought a frightful description of it, according to the fashion of an age in which the sense of picturesque beauty seems hardly to have existed. They told him that it was a little vale, so pent up between two

hills, that it was scarcely accessible on any side; little company was to be expected from without, and there was none within. "I should therefore," says he, "be entirely at liberty to converse with company of my own choosing, whom, for that reason, I would bring with me; and company equally agreeable, wherever I fixed, could not put me to less expense.

> "The sun that walks his airy way,
> To cheer the world and bring the day:
> The moon that shines with borrow'd light,
> The stars that gild the gloomy night;
> All of these, and all I see,
> Should be sung, and sung by me:
> These praise their Maker as they can,
> But want and ask the tongue of man."

The option of this retirement, to which he seems at this time to have been so well inclined, was not given him, and his mother was not sorry that the school was otherwise disposed of: "That way of life," she said, "would not agree with your constitution, and I hope God has better work for you to do!" words which, perhaps, in after years, carried with them a prophetic import and impulse to his imagination. The elder Wesley was now, from age and infirmity, become unequal to the duty of both his livings, especially as the road between them was bad, and sometimes dangerous in winter. John, therefore, at his desire, went to reside at Wroote, and officiated there as his curate. Though a native of the county, he did not escape the ague, which was then its endemic malady: and perhaps it was fortunate for him, after two years, to be summoned to his college, upon a regulation that the junior fellows, who might be chosen moderators, should attend in

person the duties of their office. It was while he held this curacy that he obtained priest's orders from the same prelate who had ordained him curate three years before.

In consequence of this summons he once more took up his abode at Lincoln College, became a tutor there, and presided as moderator at the disputations which were held six times a week in the hall; an office which exercised and sharpened his habits of logical discrimination. Some time before his return to the university, he had travelled many miles to see what is called "a serious man." This person said to him, "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember, you cannot serve Him alone: you must therefore *find* companions or *make* them: the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." Wesley never forgot these words; and it happened that while he was residing upon his curacy, such a society was prepared for him at Oxford as he and his serious adviser would have wished.

While Charles Wesley was at Westminster under his brother, a gentleman of large fortune in Ireland, and of the same family name, wrote to the father, and inquired of him if he had a son named Charles; for, if so, he would make him his heir. Accordingly his school bills, during several years, were discharged by his unseen namesake. At length a gentleman, who is supposed to have been this Mr. Wesley, called upon him, and after much conversation, asked if he was willing to accompany him to Ireland: the youth desired to write to his father before he could make answer: the father left it to his own decision, and he, who was satisfied with the fair prospects which Christ Church opened to him, chose to stay in England. John

Wesley, in his account of his brother, calls this a fair escape; the fact is more remarkable than he was aware of; for the person who inherited the property intended for Charles Wesley, and who took the name of Wesley, or Wellesley, in consequence, was the first Earl of Mornington, grandfather of Marquis Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington. Had Charles made a different choice, there might have been no Methodists, the British Empire in India might still have been menaced from Seringapatam, and the undisputed tyrant of Europe might, at this time, have insulted and endangered us on our own shores.

Charles, then pursuing contentedly his scholastic course, had been elected from Westminster to Christ Church, just after his brother John obtained his fellowship. He was diligent in study, and regular in his conduct; but when John sought to press upon him the importance of austerer habits, and a more active devotion, he protested against becoming a saint all at once, and turned a deaf ear to his admonitions. While John, however, resided at Wroote, the process which he had vainly sought to accelerate in his brother, was going on. His disposition, his early education, the example of his parents and of both his brethren, were in unison: not knowing how or when he woke out of his lethargy, he imputed the change to the efficacy of another's prayers,—most likely, he said, his mother's; and meeting with two or three undergraduates, whose inclinations and principles resembled his own, they associated together for the purpose of religious improvement, lived by rule, and received the sacrament weekly. Such conduct would at any time have attracted observation in an English university; it was peculiarly noticeable

at that time, when a laxity of opinions as well as morals obtained, and infidelity, a plague which had lately found its way into the country, was becoming so prevalent, that the vice-chancellor had, in a *programma*, exhorted the tutors to discharge their duty by double diligence, and had forbidden the undergraduates to read such books as might tend to the weakening of their faith. The greatest prudence would not have sufficed to save men from ridicule, who, at such an age, and in such a scene, professed to make religion the great business of their lives: and prudence is rarely united with enthusiasm. They were called in derision the Sacramentarians, Bible-bigots, Bible-moths, the Holy, or the Godly Club. One person, with less irreverence and more learning, observed, in reference to their methodical manner of life, that a new sect of Methodists was sprung up, alluding to the ancient school of physicians known by that name. Appellations, even of opprobrious origin, have often been adopted by the parties to which they were applied, as well as by the public, convenience legitimating the inventions of malice. In this instance there was neither maliciousness nor wit, but there was some fitness in the name; it obtained vogue; and though long, and even still sometimes indiscriminately applied to all enthusiasts, and even to all who observe the forms of religion more strictly than their neighbours, it has become the appropriate designation of the sect of which Wesley is the founder.

It was to Charles Wesley and his few associates that the name was first given. When John returned to Oxford, they gladly placed themselves under his direction; their meetings acquired more form and regularity, and obtained an accession of numbers. His standing

and character in the university gave him a degree of credit; and his erudition, his keen logic, and ready speech, commanded respect wherever he was known. But no talents, and, it may be added, no virtues, can protect the possessor from the ridicule of fools and of profligates. "I hear," says Mr. Wesley, "my son John has the honour of being styled the Father of the Holy Club: if it be so, I am sure I must be the grandfather of it: and I need not say, that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished, than to have the title of His Holiness."

One of the earliest members of this little society, Mr. Morgan, seems to have been morbidly constituted both in body and mind: and by the practice of rigorous fasting, he injured a constitution which required a very different treatment. But if his religion, in this point erroneous, led him to impose improper privations upon himself, it made him indefatigable in acts of real charity toward others: his heart and his purse were open to the poor and needy; he instructed little children, he visited the sick, and he prayed with the prisoners. In these things he led the way; and the Wesleys, who were not backward in following, have commemorated his virtues as they deserve. Morgan died young, after a long illness, in which the misery of a gloomy and mistaken religion aggravated the sufferings of disease. Wesley was accused of having been the cause of his death, by leading him into those austerities which undoubtedly had accelerated it: but in these practices Wesley had been the imitator, not the example; and the father, who had at first expressed great indignation at the extravagances of his son's associates, was so well convinced of this at last, that he placed one of his

children under his care. Two others of the party were men who afterwards acquired celebrity. James Hervey was one, author of the *Meditations*, a book which has been translated into most European languages, and for the shallowness of its matter, its superficial sentimentality, and its tinsel style, as much as for its devotional spirit, has become singularly popular. Whitefield was the other, a man so eminently connected with the rise and progress of Methodism, that his history cannot be separated from that of Wesley.

George Whitefield was born at the Bell Inn, in the city of Gloucester, at the close of the year 1714. He describes himself as froward from his mother's womb; so brutish as to hate instruction; stealing from his mother's pocket, and frequently appropriating to his own use the money that he took in the house. "If I trace myself," he says, "from my cradle to my manhood, I can see nothing in me but a fitness to be damned; and if the Almighty had not prevented me by His grace, I had now either been sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, or condemned, as the due reward of my crimes, to be for ever lifting up my eyes in torments." Yet Whitefield could recollect early movings of the heart, which satisfied him in after-life that "God loved him with an everlasting love, and had separated him, even from his mother's womb, for the work to which He afterwards was pleased to call him." He had a devout disposition, and a tender heart. When he was about ten years old, his mother made a second marriage: it proved an unhappy one. During the affliction to which this led, his brother used to read aloud Bishop Ken's Manual for Winchester Scholars. This book affected George Whitefield greatly; and when the corporation,

at their annual visitation of St. Mary de Crypt's School, where he was educated, gave him, according to custom, money for the speeches which he was chosen to deliver, he purchased the book, and found it, he says, of great benefit to his soul.

Whitefield's talents for elocution, which made him afterwards so great a performer in the pulpit, were at this time in some danger of receiving a theatrical direction. The boys at the grammar-school were fond of acting plays: the master "seeing how their vein ran," encouraged it, and composed a dramatic piece himself, which they represented before the corporation, and in which Whitefield enacted a woman's part, and appeared in girl's clothes. The remembrance of this, he says, had often covered him with confusion of face, and he hoped it would do so even to the end of his life! Before he was fifteen, he persuaded his mother to take him from school, saying, that she could not place him at the university, and more learning would only spoil him for a tradesman. Her own circumstances, indeed, were by this time so much on the decline, that his menial services were required: he began occasionally to assist her in the public-house, till at length he "put on his blue apron and his snuffers, washed mops, cleaned rooms, and became a professed and common drawer." In the little leisure which such employments allowed, this strange boy composed two or three sermons; and the romances, which had been his heart's delight, gave place for awhile to Thomas à Kempis.

When he had been about a year in this servile occupation, the inn was made over to a married brother, and George, being accustomed to the house, continued there as an assistant; but he could not agree with his sister-in-

law, and after much uneasiness, gave up the situation. His mother, though her means were scanty, permitted him to have a bed upon the ground in her house, and live with her, till Providence should point out a place for him. The way was soon indicated. A servitor of Pembroke College called upon his mother, and in the course of conversation told her, that after all his college expenses for that quarter were discharged, he had received a penny. She immediately cried out, "This will do for my son," and turning to him said, "Will you go to Oxford, George?" Happening to have the same friends as this young man, she waited on them without delay; they promised their interest to obtain a servitor's place in the same college, and in reliance upon this George returned to the grammar-school. Here he applied closely to his books, and shaking off, by the strong effort of a religious mind, all evil and idle courses, produced, by the influence of his talents and example, some reformation among his school-fellows. At the age of eighteen he was removed to Oxford; the recommendation of his friends was successful; another friend borrowed for him ten pounds, to defray the expense of entering; and with a good fortune beyond his hopes, he was admitted servitor immediately.

Whitefield found the advantage of having been used to a public-house; many who could choose their servitor preferred him, because of his diligent and alert attendance; and thus, by help of the profits of the place, and some little presents made him by a kind-hearted tutor, he was enabled to live without being beholden to his relations for more than four-and-twenty pounds in the course of three years. Little as this is, it shows, when compared with the ways and means of the elder

Wesley at college, that half a century had greatly enhanced the expenses of Oxford. At first, he was rendered uncomfortable by the society into which he was thrown: he had several chamber fellows, who would fain have made him join them in their riotous mode of life; and as he could only escape from their persecutions by sitting alone in his study, he was sometimes benumbed with cold; but when they perceived the strength as well as the singularity of his character, they suffered him to take his own way in peace.

Before Whitefield went to Oxford, he had heard of the young men there who "lived by rule and method," and were therefore called Methodists. They were now much talked of, and generally despised. He, however, was drawn toward them by kindred feelings, defended them strenuously when he heard them reviled, and when he saw them go through a ridiculing crowd to receive the sacrament at St. Mary's, was strongly inclined to follow their example. For more than a year he yearned to be acquainted with them; and it seems that the sense of his inferior condition kept him back. At length, the great object of his desires was effected. A pauper had attempted suicide, and Whitefield sent a poor woman to inform Charles Wesley that he might visit the person, and minister spiritual medicine: the messenger was charged not to say who sent her; contrary to these orders, she told his name, and Charles Wesley, who had seen him frequently walking by himself, and heard something of his character, invited him to breakfast the next morning.

An introduction to this little fellowship soon followed; and he also, like them, "began to live by rule, and to pick up the very fragments of his time, that not a moment of it might be lost."

They were now about fifteen in number: when first they began to meet, they read divinity on Sunday evenings only, and pursued their classical studies on other nights; but religion soon became the sole business of their meetings: they now regularly visited the prisoners and the sick, communicated once a week, and fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, the stationary days of the ancient church, which were thus set apart, because on those days our Saviour had been betrayed and crucified. They also drew up a scheme of self-examination, to assist themselves, by means of prayer and meditation, in attaining simplicity and the love of God. Except that it speaks of obeying the laws of the Church of England, it might fitly be appended to the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. Its obvious faults were, that such self-examination would leave little time for anything else; that the habits of life which it requires and pre-supposes would be as burthensome as the rules of the monastic orders; and that the proposed simplicity would generally end in producing the worst of artificial characters; for where it made one out of a thousand a saint, it would make the rest inevitably formalists and hypocrites. Religion is defined in this scheme to be *a recovery of the image of God*. It cannot be doubted that they who framed it were filled with devotion the most fervent, and charity the most unbounded, however injudicious in many respects the means were whereby they thought to promote and strengthen such dispositions in themselves. But Wesley, when he had advanced in his career, looked back upon himself as having been at this time in a state of great spiritual ignorance: and the two leading ministers, who drew up for the use of the Methodists, and under the sanction of the collected preachers, the life of their

founder, remark, that in this scheme the great sincerity and earnestness of Wesley and his friends are discernible, but that "the darkness of their minds as to gospel truths is very evident to those who are favoured with true Evangelical views."

To the younger members of the university their conduct, which now rather affected singularity than avoided it, was matter of general ridicule; and there were elder and wiser heads who disapproved their course, as leading fast toward enthusiasm and extravagance. Wesley had not that confidence in his own judgment by which he was afterwards so strongly characterised, and he wrote to his father for advice. The principles upon which he proceeded were unexceptionable, the motives excellent: and the circumstances which gave offence, and excited just apprehension, would not only be unintentionally softened in his own representation, but would lose much of their weight when reported from a distance, and through this channel, to one who was prepossessed by natural affection. The father says in reply, "As to your designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *valde probo*: and that I have the highest reason to bless God for giving me two sons together at Oxford, to whom He has given grace and courage to turn the war against the World and the Devil, which is the best way to conquer them." He advised them to obtain the approbation of the bishop for visiting the prisoners; and encouraged them by saying, that when he was an undergraduate he had performed this work of charity, and reflected on it with great comfort now in his latter days. "You have reason," he says, "to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. Morgan, who I see,

in the most difficult service, is ready to break the ice for you. I think I must adopt him to be my son. together with you and your brother Charles; and when I have such a Ternion to prosecute that war, wherein I am now *miles emeritus*, I shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate. If it be possible, I should be glad to see you all three here in the fine end of the summer. But if I cannot have that satisfaction, I am sure I can reach you every day, though you were beyond the Indies." He exhorted them to walk prudently, though not fearfully; and prayed that God would keep them humble. "Be not high-minded," said he; "preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties, (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation,) the more all good and wise men will value you, if they see your actions are of a piece; and what is infinitely more, He by whom actions and intentions are weighed will both accept and reward you."

Thus encouraged and thus advised, Wesley consulted the bishop, who sanctioned and approved their visiting the prisons. This was no doubtful matter; the parts of their conduct which he might have regarded with disapprobation, were precisely those upon which it would not be thought necessary to consult him. About this time Wesley became personally acquainted with William Law, a man whose writings completed what Jeremy Taylor, and the treatise *De Imitatione Christi*, had begun. When first he visited him, he was prepared to object to his views of Christian

duty as too elevated to be attainable; but Law silenced and satisfied him by replying, "We shall do well to aim at the highest degrees of perfection, if we may thereby at least attain to mediocrity." Law is a powerful writer: it is said that few books have ever made so many religious enthusiasts as his *Christian Perfection* and his *Serious Call*: indeed the youth who should read them without being perilously affected, must have either a light mind or an unusually strong one. But Law himself, who has shaken so many intellects, sacrificed his own at last to the reveries and rhapsodies of Jacob Behmen. Perhaps the art of engraving was never applied to a more extraordinary purpose, nor in a more extraordinary manner, than when the nonsense of the German shoemaker was elucidated in a series of prints after Law's designs, representing the anatomy of the spiritual man. His own happiness, however, was certainly not diminished by the change: the system of the ascetic is dark and cheerless; but mysticism lives in a sunshine of its own, and dreams of the light of heaven, while the visions of the ascetic are such as the fear of the devil produces, rather than the love of God. It was in his happier state of mind that Law was found by Wesley, and in this spirit he said to him, "You would have a philosophical religion, but there can be no such thing. Religion is the most plain, simple thing in the world. It is only, *we love Him because He first loved us*" Wesley on one occasion confessed to him that he felt greatly dejected, because he saw so little fruit from his labours. "My dear friend," replied Law, "you reverse matters from their proper order. You are to follow the Divine Light, wherever it leads you,

in all your conduct. It is God alone that gives the blessing. I pray you always mind your own work, and go on with cheerfulness; and God, you may depend upon it, will take care of His. Besides, sir, I perceive you would fain convert the world! but you must wait God's own time. Nay, if after all He is pleased to use you only as a hewer of wood or a drawer of water, you should submit,—yea, you should be thankful to Him that He has honoured you so far." On another occasion Law said to him,—"Sir, you are troubled because you do not understand how God is dealing with you. Perhaps if you did, it would not so well answer His design. He is teaching you to *trust* Him, farther than you can *see* Him."

These visits to Law, who at that time resided near London, were performed on foot, the Wesleys travelling in this manner that they might save the more money for the poor. It was so little the custom in that age for men in their rank of life to walk any distance, as to make them think it a discovery that four or five-and-twenty miles are an easy and safe day's journey. They discovered also, with equal surprise, that it is easy to read while walking, and that it neither made them faint, nor produced any other symptom of weariness. Some years afterwards, when John carried his economy of time to the utmost, he used to read on horseback, till some severe falls, which he met with in consequence, convinced him that this practice might probably cost him his life. The brothers also accustomed themselves to converse together in Latin, whenever they were alone: when they had subsequently much intercourse with the Moravians, they found the great advantage of having acquired this power.

Yet Wesley's mind was now in that perturbed and restless state, that he began to doubt the utility, and even the lawfulness, of carnal studies. In a letter to his mother, written under evident disquietude, he says, "To all who give signs of their not being strangers to it, I propose this question,—and why not to you rather than any?—Shall I quite break off my pursuit of all learning, but what immediately tends to practice? I once desired to make a fair show in languages and philosophy; but it is past: there is a more excellent way, and if I cannot attain to any progress in the one without throwing up all thoughts of the other, why, fare it well! Yet a little while, and we shall all be equal in knowledge if we are in virtue." In the same letter he says, "I am to renounce the world,—to draw off my affections from this world, and fix them on a better: but how? what is the surest and the shortest way? Is it not to be humble? surely this is a large step in the way. But the question occurs, how am I to do this? To own the necessity of it is not to be humble. In many things you have interceded for me and prevailed: who knows but in this too you may be successful? If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening which you formerly bestowed upon me in another manner, I doubt not but it would be as useful now for correcting my heart, as it was then for forming my judgment.—When I observe how fast life flies away, and how slow improvement comes, I think one can never be too much afraid of dying before one has learned to live."

The good intentions of Wesley and his associates could not be questioned; but they were now running fast into fanaticism; and a meeting was held at Christ

Church, by the Seniors of the College, to consult in what manner the evil might be checked. The report in Oxford was, that the Dean and the Censors were going to blow up the Godly Club. When Samuel Wesley heard of this, he called it an execrable consultation, in order to stop the progress of religion, by giving it a false name. He did not like, he said, that they should be "called a club, for that name was really calculated to do mischief;" but the charge of enthusiasm could weigh with none but such as drink away their senses, or never had any; for surely activity in social duties, and a strict attendance on the ordained means of grace, are the strongest guards imaginable against it." However, it was not long before Samuel, who was of riper judgment than his brother, and of a less ardent disposition, began to perceive that John was carrying his principles to excess, and that he excited injurious prejudices against himself, by affecting singularity in things which were of no importance. Wesley, in defending himself, observed, that the most unpopular of his habits were those of early rising and keeping little company, in the propriety of which there could be no difference of opinion between them.

Wesley would not be at the expense of having his hair dressed, in order that the money which would otherwise have been employed in this vile fashion might be given to the poor; he wore it remarkably long, and flowing loose upon his shoulders. "As to my hair," he said, "I am much more sure that what this enables me to do is according to the Scripture, than I am that the length of it is contrary to it." His mother fancied that this fashion injured his health, for he was often indisposed; and therefore she urged him to have

it taken off. To this he objected, because it would cause an additional expense, which would lessen his means of relieving the needy. Samuel proposed the middle course of cutting it shorter, by which means the singularity of his appearance would be lessened, without entrenching upon his meritorious economy. This was the only instance in which he condescended, in any degree, to the opinion of others. Soon afterwards Samuel went to Oxford, that he might form a better opinion of his brethren's demeanour upon the spot, than could be formed from the contradictory accounts which reached him. Their general conduct, and all their principles, received his unqualified approbation: but he perceived that Morgan was far gone in his fatal malady, was diseased in mind as well as body, and had fallen into that wretched state of weakness in which religion, instead of food and support, was, by a deplorable perversion of its nature, converted into poison. He perceived also that John was pursuing habits of austerity in such disregard of health, as if he were eager for death, and was an enemy to his own frail carcase. Morgan did not live long; and it appeared probable that Wesley would soon follow him to that world, the preparation for which they seemed to consider not merely as the most important, but as the sole business of this. Hard study, exercise carried sometimes in his journeys beyond his strength, the exertion of frequent preaching and earnest discourse, fasting upon all the appointed days of the ancient church, and a most abstemious diet at all times, had reduced him to an alarming condition. Frequent spitting of blood indicated the consequences which might be apprehended; at length he was awakened at midnight by

the breaking of a blood-vessel; and he has recorded in his private diary, that thinking himself at that moment on the brink of eternity, he cried to God, "Oh prepare me for Thy coming, and come when Thou wilt!" This attack compelled him to put himself under the direction of medical men, and after awhile he thoroughly recovered.

About this time, Samuel, finding that promotion at Westminster was hopeless, on account of his connection with a party who were deservedly obnoxious to government, accepted the mastership of Tiverton School. Before he removed so far westward, he went to visit his parents at Epworth, and there his two brothers met him, that the whole family might, for the last time in this world, be gathered together. Among the many solemn circumstances of human life, few can be more solemn than such a meeting. For some years their father had been declining; and he was very solicitous that the cure in which he had laboured faithfully during so long a course of years should be obtained for his son John, if possible, from an anxious desire that the good which he had effected might not be lost through the carelessness of a lukewarm successor; and that his wife and daughters might not be dispossessed of the home wherein the one had lived so long, and the others had been born and bred. Wesley, who had not before thought of such a proposal, gave no opinion upon it now; but in the ensuing year his father pressed him to apply for the next presentation, and Samuel urged him to the same effect. At first he seems to have hesitated how to decide. "I know," says he, writing from Oxford upon the subject, "if I could stand my ground here, and approve myself a faithful minister of our blessed Jesus, by honour and dishonour, through evil report and

good report, then there would not be a place under heaven like this for improvement in every good work." An absence of some little time from Oxford had shown how soon the effects of all his exertions might be counteracted. One of his pupils confessed that he was becoming more and more afraid of singularity; another had studied some of Mr. Locke's writings, which had convinced him of the mischief of regarding authority; a third had been converted from fasting by a fever and a physician. The little body of his associates had diminished in number from seven-and-twenty to five. These things made him reflect closely: the ill consequences of his singularity were diminution of fortune, loss of friends and reputation. "As to my fortune," said he, "I well know, though perhaps others do not, that I could not have borne a larger than I have. For friends, they were either trifling or serious: if triflers, fare them well, a noble escape; if serious, those who are more serious are left. And as for reputation, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that, a clean heart, a single eye, and a soul full of God. A fair exchange, if, by the loss of reputation, we can purchase the lowest degree of purity of heart."

These considerations led to the conclusion, that there was little prospect of doing any lasting good in his present situation; and when the fitness of settling at Epworth, if the succession could be obtained, was pressed upon him, he considered it not so much with reference to his utility, as to his own well-being in spiritual things. The question, as it appeared to him, was not whether he could do more good to others there or at Oxford, but whether he could do more good to

himself, seeing that wherever he could be most holy himself, there he could most promote holiness in others; but he could improve himself more at Oxford than at any other place, and at Oxford therefore he determined to remain. This reasoning was well answered by his father; who told him, that even at Oxford he might have promoted holiness much more than he had done, if he had taken the right method, "for there is a particular turn of mind for these matters, great prudence as well as great fervour. I cannot," he said, "allow austerity or fasting, considered by themselves, to be proper acts of holiness, nor am I for a solitary life. God made us for a social life. We are to let our light shine before men, and that not barely through the chinks of a bushel for fear the wind should blow it out: the design of lighting it was, that it might give light to all who went into the house of God. And to this academical studies are only preparatory." He concluded, with singular force and eloquent earnestness, in these words: "We are not to fix our view on one single point of duty, but to take in the complicated view of all the circumstances in every state of life that offers. This is the case before us: put all the circumstances together; if you are not indifferent whether the labours of an aged father, for above forty years in God's vineyard, be lost, and the fences of it trodden down and destroyed;—if you consider that Mr. M. must in all probability succeed me if you do not, and that the prospect of that mighty Nimrod's coming hither shocks my soul, and is in a fair way of bringing down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave;—if you have any care for our family, which must be dismally shattered as soon as I am dropt;—if you reflect on the dear love and longing which this poor

people has for you, whereby you will be enabled to do God the more service, and the plenteousness of the harvest, consisting of near two thousand souls, whereas you have not many more souls in the university,—you may perhaps alter your mind, and bend your will to His, who has promised if in all our ways we acknowledge Him, He will direct our paths."

Samuel, when he heard that his brother had declared himself unalterably resolved not to accept the living if he could get it, knew him, as he said, well enough to believe that no one could move his mind, except He who made it. Without, therefore, drawing the saw of controversy, as he called it, he set before him his own example. "I left Oxford," said he, "with all its opportunity of good, on a worldly account, at my father's desire. I left my last settlement by the same determination, and should have thought I sinned both times if I had not followed it." And he pressed upon John the simple proposition that having taken orders, he was solemnly engaged to undertake the cure of souls before God, and His High Priest, and His Church. Wesley replied both to his father and his brother in a manner more characteristic of the man than creditable to his judgment. He argued as if his own salvation would be rendered impossible at Epworth: he could not, he said, stand his ground there for a month, against intemperance in sleeping, eating, and drinking; his spirit would thus be dissolved; the cares and desires of the world would roll back with a full tide upon him, and while he preached to others, he should be a castaway himself. Uninterrupted freedom from trifling acquaintance was necessary for him: he dreaded, as the bane of piety, the company of good sort of men, lukewarm Christians,

persons that have a great concern for religion, but no sense of it. "They undermine insensibly," says he, "all my resolutions, and quite steal from me the little fervour I have. I never come from among these saints of the world (as John Valdesso calls them) faint, dissipated, and shorn of all my strength, but I say, God deliver me from a half Christian!" *Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni*: the point was, whether he should serve Christ or Belial. He stood in need of persons nearly of his own judgment, and engaged in the same studies; persons who were awakened into a full and lively conviction that they had only one work to do upon earth; who had absolutely devoted themselves to God; who took up their cross daily; who would constantly watch over his soul, and according to the occasion, administer reproof, advice, or exhortation with all plainness and all gentleness. But this was a blessing which he could enjoy nowhere but at Oxford. There also he knew none of the cares of the world; he heard of such things, and read of them, but he knew them not: whatever he wanted was provided for him there, without any expense of thought. There, too, he endured that contempt which is a part of the cross, that every man who would follow his Saviour must bear. Every true Christian, he said, is contemned by all who are not so, and who know him to be such: until he be thus contemned no man is in a state of salvation; for though a man may be despised without being saved, yet he cannot be saved without being despised. More good also, he averred, was to be done to others by his continuance at Oxford; the schools of the prophets were there: was it not a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain than to

purify a particular stream? And for the argument, that Epworth was a wider sphere of action, where he would have the charge of two thousand souls, he exclaimed, "Two thousand souls! I see not how any man living can take care of an hundred." If any stress be laid upon the love of the people at Epworth,—"I ask how long will it last? Only till I come to tell them plainly that their deeds are evil, and to make a particular application of that general sentence, to say to each, *Thou art the man!* Alas, sir, do I not know what love they had for you at first? And how have they used you since? Why, just as every one will be used whose business it is to bring light to them that love to sit in darkness!" To the concluding part of his father's letter he replied thus: "As for the flock committed to your care, whom for many years you have diligently fed with the sincere milk of the word, I trust in God your labour shall not be in vain, either to yourself or them. Many of them the Great Shepherd has, by your hand, delivered from the hand of the destroyer, some of whom are already entered into peace, and some remain unto this day. For yourself, I doubt not, but when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall come to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a ripe shock of corn, full of years and victories. And He that took care of the poor sheep before you were born, will not forget them when you are dead."

This letter convinced Samuel how unavailing it must needs be to reason farther with one who was possessed by such notions. Nevertheless, as John had requested to know his farther thoughts, he asked him if all his labours were come to this, that more was absolutely necessary for the very being of his Christian life, than

for the salvation of all the parish priests in England. "What you say of contempt," said he, "is nothing to the purpose: for if you will go to Epworth, I will answer for it you shall, in a competent time, be despised as much as your heart can wish." But he maintained that there was not in Euclid a proposition more certain than this, that a man must be esteemed in order to be useful; and he rested the case upon his former argument, that a general resolution against undertaking the cure of souls was contrary to his engagement at ordination: "The order of the Church," said he, "stakes you down, and the more you struggle will hold the faster. You must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise or repent of it: *utrum mavis?* which do you prefer?" Wesley admitted the force of his ordination oath, but denied that it had this meaning. But acknowledging the established principle, that the mode and extent of the obligation which an oath imposes are not to be determined by him who takes, but by him who requires it, he wrote to the bishop who ordained him, proposing this single question, whether, at ordination, he had engaged himself to undertake the cure of a parish or not? The bishop's answer was in these words: "It doth not seem to me that, at your ordination, you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and His Church in your present or some other station." Wesley believed he had all reasonable evidence that this was the case, and here the discussion ended. He had made it an affair of religious casuistry, and therefore the interest of his mother and sisters in the decision, nearly as this point lay at the father's heart, seems to have been totally disregarded by him as unworthy of any consideration.

CHAPTER III.

WESLEY IN AMERICA.

WESLEY the father died in the ensuing April, at a good old age, and ripe for immortality. John and Charles were with him during the last stage of his illness. A few days before his departure he said to them, "The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and death. To-morrow I would see you all with me round this table, that we may once more drink of the Cup of Blessing, before we drink it new in the kingdom of God. With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I die." On the morrow he was so exceeding weak and full of pain, that he could not receive the elements without difficulty, and often repeated, "Thou shakest me, thou shakest me!" He had no fear of death, and the peace of God which he enjoyed appeared sometimes to suspend his bodily sufferings, and when they recurred, to sustain his mind above them. When, as nature seemed spent, and his speech was failing, his son John asked him whether he was not near heaven, he answered, "Yes, I am," distinctly, and with a voice of hope and joy. After John had used the commendatory prayer, he said, "Now you have done all": these were his last words, and he passed away so peacefully and insensibly, that his children continued over him a considerable time in doubt whether or not the spirit was departed. Mrs. Wesley, who for several days, whenever she entered his chamber, had been carried out of it in a fit, recovered her forti-

tude now, and said her prayers were heard, for God had granted him an easy death, and had strengthened her to bear it.

The mother and daughter were left with little or no provision; and a brutal woman, of whom Mr. Wesley rented a few fields, seized the live stock on the very day of his funeral, for a debt of fifteen pounds. Samuel was now their support: "If you take London in your way," said Charles to him, "my mother desires you would remember she is a clergyman's widow. Let the Society give her what they please, she must be still, in some degree, *burthensome* to you, as she calls it. How do I envy you that glorious burthen, and wish I could share in it! You must put me into some way of getting a little money, that I may do something in this shipwreck of the family."

The latest human desires of this good man were, that he might complete his work upon the book of Job, pay his debts, and see his eldest son once more. The first of these desires seems to have been nearly, if not wholly accomplished; and John was charged to present the volume to Queen Caroline. Going to London on this commission, he found that the trustees of the new colony of Georgia were in search of persons who would preach the gospel there to the settlers and the Indians, and that they had fixed their eyes upon him and his associates, as men who appeared to possess the habits and qualities required for such a service. Dr. Burton, of Corpus Christi College, was one of the trustees: he was well acquainted with Wesley, and being at this time in London, introduced him to Mr. Oglethorpe, the founder of the colony. At first when it was proposed to him to go upon this mission, he peremptorily refused.

Arguments were adduced which made him less resolute in his refusal: objections which he started were obviated; and when he spake of the grief which it must give his mother if he were to accept the proposal, saying he was the staff of her age, her chief support and comfort, it was evident that he was shaken. He was asked, in reply, whether he would go if his mother's approbation could be obtained? this he thought impossible, but he consented that the trial should be made, and secretly determined, that, if she were willing, he would receive her assent as the call of God. Her answer was. "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more."

He did not, however, resolve finally upon this measure without consulting those persons whose opinions had most weight with him, among whom were William Law, and John Byrom the poet. Their approbation confirmed him in his intention, though their dissent might not have shaken his purpose. His brother Samuel also was content that he should go: perhaps he thought it well that he should engage in a service wherein so much zeal was required, that the excess which now led him into extravagances might find full employment. It was, indeed, his growing attachment to ascetic principles and habits which made him desirous of removing from the temptations of the world. He looked forward to the conversion of the Indians as comparatively an easy task: there, he said, he should have the advantage of preaching to a people not yet beguiled by philosophy and vain deceit; and might enforce to them the plain truth of God, without its being softened and rendered useless by the comments of men. Little

had he read of missionary labours, and less could he have reflected upon them when he reasoned thus! But to an unbeliever, who said to him, "What is this, sir; are *you* one of the knights errant? How, I pray, got Quixotism into your head? You want nothing, you have a good provision for life, and are in a way of preferment: and must you leave all to fight windmills—to convert savages in America!" he answered feelingly and calmly, "Sir, if the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive; but if it be of God, I am sober-minded. For He has declared, 'There is no man that hath left house, or friends, or brethren, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.'"

It had been Charles Wesley's intention to spend all his days at Oxford as a tutor, for he dreaded exceedingly to enter into orders: now, however, he determined to accompany his brother. This was strongly opposed by Samuel, but in vain: he was more docile towards John, whom he always regarded as his guide, and in deference to his judgment consented to be ordained; but he went out in the capacity of secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe. Their companions were Charles Delamotte, the son of a London merchant, and Benjamin Ingham, who was one of the little community at Oxford. "Our end," says Wesley, "in leaving our native country, was not to avoid want, (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings,) nor to gain the dung and dross of riches and honour; but singly this, to save our souls; to live wholly to the glory of God." They embarked at Gravesend on October 14th, 1735, and from that day the series of his printed journals commences.

Oh that all men who have produced great effects in the world had left such memoirs of themselves!

On board the same vessel there were six-and-twenty Moravians, going to join a party of their brethren from Herrnhut, who had gone out the preceding year under the sanction of the British government, and with the approbation of the English Church; some of our bishops, indeed, having of their own accord offered to ordain their pastors. The conductor of this second detachment was David Nitschmann, one of a family distinguished for their sufferings and their zeal: he was afterwards the first bishop of the revived Church of the Brethren, the appellation by which the Moravians designate themselves. The rise and institutions of this remarkable people, with whom Wesley was for some time intimately connected, and from whom much of the economy of the Methodists has been derived, will be described hereafter. Wesley was exceedingly impressed with the piety, the simplicity, and the equanimity of these his shipmates: he applied himself to the German language, that he might converse with them the more freely, and Nitschmann and the others began to learn English.

While he resided at Oxford he had always hitherto been restrained, perhaps unconsciously, by some regard to appearances; that restraint was no longer felt, and he and his companions began to put their ascetic principles in full practice. Believing, he says, the denying ourselves, even in the smallest instances, might, by the blessing of God, be helpful to us, we wholly left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined ourselves to vegetable food, chiefly rice or biscuit. After a while they persuaded themselves that nature did not require such frequent supplies as they had been accustomed to,—so

they agreed to leave off supper: and Wesley having slept on the floor one night, because his bed had been wetted in a storm, thought he should not find it needful to sleep in a bed any more. His next experiment was, whether life might not as well be sustained by one sort of food as by variety: he and Delamotte accordingly tried with bread, as being the staff of life in Europe, and they found themselves never more vigorous and hearty. Upon this he exclaims, "Blessed are the pure in heart: to them all things are pure: every creature is good to them, and nothing to be rejected. But let them who are not thus pure use every help and remove every hindrance, always remembering, that he that despiseth little things shall fall by little and little." "At this time," his official biographers say, "he had only attained to the spirit of bondage unto fear, and he found that all his senses were ready to betray him into sin, upon every exercise of them." In a spirit akin to this, and derived from the same source, he wrote from on board to his brother Samuel, beseeching him, by the mercies of God, to banish all such poison from his school as the classics which were usually read there, and introduce Christian authors in their place; for it was his duty to instruct his scholars, "not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more in the gospel." Fanaticism always comes to this in its progress: first it depreciates learning, then it would destroy it. There have been Christians, as they believed themselves, who would have burnt the Alexandrian library upon the same logic as the Caliph Omar, with no other difference than that of calling their book by a Greek name instead of an Arabic one.

The course of life which they adopted on board was

as regular as the circumstances of a voyage would allow, and as severe as the rule of a monastic order.

It was a rough season, their passage was tempestuous, and, during the storm, Wesley felt that he was unfit, because he was unwilling to die. Ashamed of this unwillingness, he reproached himself as if he had no faith, and he admired the impassable tranquillity to which the Moravians had attained. They had evinced that they were delivered from pride, anger, and revenge; those servile offices, which none of the English would perform for the other passengers, they offered themselves to undertake, and would receive no recompense; saying, it was good for their proud hearts, and their Saviour had done more for them. No injury could move their meekness; if they were struck or thrown down, they made no complaint, nor suffered the slightest indication of resentment to appear. Wesley was curious to see whether they were equally delivered from the spirit of fear, and this he had an opportunity of ascertaining. In the midst of the psalm with which they began their service, the sea broke over, split the main-sail, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if, he says, the great deep had already swallowed us up. A dreadful screaming was heard amongst the English colonists: the Moravians calmly sung on. Wesley afterwards asked one of them, if he was not afraid at that time. He replied, "I thank God, no." He was then asked if the women and children were not afraid. His answer was, "No; our women and children are not afraid to die." In the intervals of fine weather which they enjoyed, Wesley said he could conceive no difference comparable to that between a smooth and rough sea, except that which is between a mind calmed by the love of God, and

one torn up by the storms of earthly passions. On February 5th they anchored in the Savannah river.

The colony in Georgia, the last which the English established in North America, had been only three years founded at this time. The British government had encouraged it, with wise political views, as a defence for the southern provinces against the Spaniards, and for the purpose of occupying a critical position which otherwise, there was reason to believe, would have been occupied by the French, to the great danger and detriment of the British settlements: but it had been projected by men of enlarged benevolence, as a means of providing for the employment and well-being of those who were poor and distressed at home.

The ship in which Wesley was embarked cast anchor near Tybee island, "where the groves of pines, running along the shore, made," he says, "an agreeable prospect, showing, as it were, the bloom of spring in the depth of winter." On the following morning they landed on a small uninhabited island, where Mr. Oglethorpe led them to a rising ground, and they all knelt and returned thanks to God for having arrived in safety. Mr. Oglethorpe went that day to Savannah, and returned the next, bringing with him Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg, one of the pastors of the Moravians. Wesley perceiving in him the same character which in his fellow-passengers had impressed him so strongly, asked his advice concerning his own conduct in a situation which was new to him; the German replied, "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" Wesley had hitherto been

accustomed to be himself the teacher: it was the first time that he had been treated as a novice or a child in spiritual things: he was surprised, and knew not what to answer: the German perceived this, and said, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" After a pause he replied, "I know He is the Saviour of the world." "True," rejoined Spangenberg, "but do you know He has saved *you*?" Wesley answered, "I hope He has died to save me." The Moravian only added, "Do you know yourself?" and Wesley, who was evidently awed by this catechism, confesses, that in answering "I do," he feared he was but uttering vain words.

The brothers now separated. Charles went with Ingham to Frederica, a settlement on the west side of the island of St. Simons, in the mouth of the Alatamaha. John and Delamotte took up their lodging with the Germans at Savannah, till the house which was intended for them should be erected. "We had now," says Wesley, "an opportunity day by day, of observing their whole behaviour; for we were in one room with them from morning till night, unless for the little time spent in walking. They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another. They had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the gospel of our Lord in all things." And having been present at a consultation concerning the affairs of their church, in which, after several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a bishop, he says, that "the great simplicity,

as well as solemnity, of the whole, almost made him forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine himself in one of those assemblies where form and state were not, but Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman presided,—yet with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Among the things of which he was chiefly afraid upon leaving England, one had been, that he should never again have so many faithful friends as he left there. He now exclaimed, "But who knoweth the mercy and power of God? From ten friends I am awhile secluded, and he hath opened me a door into the whole Moravian Church."

When Dr. Burton proposed Wesley as a proper person for the mission to Georgia, he was influenced by an opinion, that the more men were inured to a contempt of the conveniences and comforts of life, to serious thoughts and bodily austerities, the fitter they were for such an undertaking. He told him that the apostolical manner of preaching from house to house might be effectual, and turn many to righteousness. He reminded him (as if seeing upon what rock he was most likely to be wrecked) of how great importance it was to distinguish with prudence "between what is essential and what is merely circumstantial to Christianity; between what is indispensable and what is variable; between what is of divine, and what is of human authority"; and he warned him, that the people among whom he was going were "babes in the progress of their Christian life, to be fed with milk instead of strong meat." In one point Dr. Burton judged rightly; no man was more desirous of courting discomfort, or more able to endure privations and fatigue; in all other points never was man more thoroughly unfit for the service which he had undertaken.

Wesley, however, was well pleased at first with his situation: the place, he said, was pleasant beyond imagination: he was even persuaded that it was exceedingly healthful, and he wrote to his mother, saying, he should be heartily glad if any poor and religious men or women of Epworth or Wroote could come over to him; inviting them with a promise of land enough, and of provisions till they could live upon its produce. He was satisfied also, with his reception, and the effect which he produced. The people crowded to hear him: and when he beheld the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterwards sat upon all their faces, he could scarcely refrain from anticipating a continuance of the impression, "in spite," he says, "of experience, and reason, and Scripture altogether." One of the ladies to whom he was introduced on his first landing, assured him that he would see as well-dressed a congregation on Sunday, as most which he had seen in London. "I did so," he says, "and soon after took occasion to expound those Scriptures which relate to dress, and to press them freely upon my audience, in a plain and close application. All the time that I afterwards ministered at Savannah, I saw neither gold in the church, nor costly apparel; but the congregation in general was almost constantly clothed in plain clean linen or woollen. All," he said, "was smooth, and fair, and promising: many seemed to be awakened: all were full of respect and commendation." He taught one school and Delamotte another: some of Delamotte's boys, who wore shoes and stockings, thought themselves superior to the poor fellows who went bare-foot; and Wesley proposed to change schools for awhile, that he might endeavour to cure an evil which his friend found

himself unable to remedy. To effect this he went into the school without shoes and stockings himself. The boys stared at him and at each other: he, of course, took no notice, but kept them to their work: it was soon evident that the unshod party felt the comfort of being thus countenanced, and before the week was over, pride stood no longer in the way of discipline or of economy, and many of the others came to school bare-legged also.

This was not the only instance in which he gained a signal victory over the vanities of the world: one of the better order of colonists gave a ball; the public prayers began about the same time; the church was full, and the ball-room so empty, that the entertainment could not go forward. He perceived that this made many persons angry, and he did not perceive that it would have been prudent as well as easy not to have excited such feelings on such an occasion. All might have continued well, could he but have remembered the advice of Dr. Burton, to consider his parishioners as babes in their progress, and therefore to feed them with milk. Instead of this, he drenched them with the physic of an intolerant discipline. Following the rubric in opposition to the practice of the English Church, he insisted upon baptising children by immersion, and refused to baptise them if the parents would not consent to this rude and perilous method. Some persons he would not receive as sponsors, because they were not communicants; and when one of the most pious men in the colony earnestly desired to be admitted to the communion, he refused to administer it to him, unless he would submit to be re-baptised, because he was not a member of an episcopal church; and he would not read the burial-service over another for the same reason

or for some one founded upon the same principle. He was accused of making his sermons so many satires upon particular persons, and for this cause his auditors fell off; for though one might have been very well pleased to hear the others preached at, no person liked the chance of being made the mark himself. All the quarrels which had occurred since his arrival were occasioned, it was affirmed, by his intermeddling conduct. "Besides," said a plain speaker to him, "the people say they are Protestants, but as for you they cannot tell what religion you are of; they never heard of such a religion before, and they do not know what to make of it."

It was not merely by his austere opinions and ascetic habits that Wesley gave occasion to this notion. With all his rigid adherence to the letter of the rubric, his disposition for departing from the practices of the Church and establishing a discipline of his own, was now beginning to declare itself. He divided the public prayers, following, in this respect, the original appointment of the Church, which, he said, was still observed in a few places in England; so he performed the morning service at five, and reserved the communion office, with the sermon, for a separate service at eleven: the evening service was at three. He visited his parishioners from house to house in order, setting apart for this purpose the hours between twelve and three, when they could not work because of the heat. And he agreed with his companions to form, if they could, the more serious parishioners into a little society, who should assemble once or twice a week for the purpose of improving, instructing, and exhorting each other: from these again a smaller number was to be selected for

a more intimate intercommunion, which might be forwarded partly by the ministers conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them altogether to the minister's house on Sunday afternoons. Mr. Oglethorpe so far accorded with his views of reformation, as to give orders that no person should profane the Sabbath, by fishing or fowling upon that day; but the governor, who had cares enough to disquiet him, arising from the precarious state of the colony, was teased and soured by the complaints which were now perpetually brought against the two brothers, and soon began to wish that he had brought out with him men of more practicable tempers.

The best people are not to be looked for in new colonies;—formed as such establishments hitherto have been in modern times, they usually consist of adventurers, who have either no fortune to lose, or no character,—the most daring or the most desperate members of society. Charles Wesley attempted the doubly difficult task of reforming some of the lady colonists, and reconciling their petty jealousies and hatreds of each other; in which he succeeded no farther than just to make them cordially agree in hating him, and cabalting to get rid of him in any way. He had not been six days at Frederica before he was involved in so many disputes and disagreeable circumstances, that he declared he would not spend six days more in the same manner for all Georgia,—but it was neither in his power to change his situation so soon, nor to improve it. As he was at prayers in a myrtle grove, a gun was fired from the other side of the bushes, and the ball passed close by him: he believed it was aimed at him; yet if there had really been a design against his life, they who

made the attempt would not so easily have given up their purpose. Oglethorpe was at this time gone inland with the Indians, to see the limits which they claimed. During his absence the doctor chose to shoot during service-time on the Sunday, in the midst of the sermon, and so near the church, that the constable thought it his duty to go out and deliver him to the commanding-officer, who put him under arrest in the guard-room. This was of course imputed to the chaplain; the doctor's wife poured out a torrent of execrations against him in the street; and to heighten the indignation which was excited, the doctor himself refused to go out to any patient, though his services were wanted by a woman at the time. When Oglethorpe returned, he found Frederica in an uproar, and he was informed that a plan was concerted among the settlers for abandoning the colony, and that Charles Wesley was the prime mover of the mischief. The accusation came in too authentic a manner to be disregarded; for it was made by the spokesman of the discontented, who in their name demanded leave to depart. Oglethorpe accordingly sent for him, and charged him with mutiny and sedition, yet treated him with some remains of kindness, and said that he should not scruple shooting half-a-dozen of those fellows at once, but that from regard to him, he had spoken to him first. A cross-examination, skilfully managed, made the accuser himself admit that Charles Wesley had no otherwise excited the mutineers to this resolution than by forcing them to prayers. Still an uncomfortable feeling remained in Oglethorpe's breast, which no explanation could remove:—he had expected that men of such talents, such learning, such piety, and such zeal as the Wesleys,

would have contributed essentially to the good order of the colony: and he complained that, instead of love, meekness, and true religion among the people, there was nothing but mere formal prayers: but of the form, he was soon convinced, there was as little as of the reality, seldom more than half-a-dozen attending at the public service. Still he thought Charles had raised these disorders,—as in truth he had been the occasion of them by his injudicious zeal: Charles asked whether it was his wish that he should altogether forbear from conversing with the parishioners. To this the governor would give no answer; but he spoke of the difficulties of his own situation. "Everything was in confusion," he said: "it was much easier to govern a thousand persons than threescore; and he durst not leave them before they were settled."

This interview left neither party in an enviable state of mind. Charles wrote to his brother, the letter was intercepted, and the scoundrel who opened it, proclaimed its contents: instead of writing again, he resolved to send Ingham to him. There was one person of better character among these profligate settlers, who burst into tears when he took leave of Ingham, and said, "One good man is leaving us already; I foresee nothing but desolation. Must my poor children be brought up like these savages?" And Charles himself, feeling the utter loneliness in which he was left, though but by a temporary separation, exclaims in his journal, "O happy, happy friend! *abiit, erupit, evasit*; but woe is me that I am still constrained to dwell in Meshech! I languished," he says, "to bear him company, followed him with my eye till out of sight, and then sunk into deeper dejection of spirit than I had known before."

Mr. Oglethorpe now began to manifest his displeasure in a manner not more distressing to its object than dishonourable to himself. Charles Wesley, expecting to live with him as his secretary, had taken out with him from England no furniture of any kind: he was now informed that Mr. Oglethorpe had given orders that no one should use his things; and upon observing that he supposed the order did not extend to him, was told by the servant that he was particularly included by name. "Thanks be to God," said he, "it is not yet made capital to give me a morsel of bread. I begin now," he says in his journal, "to be abused and slighted into an opinion of my own considerableness. I could not be more trampled upon were I a fallen minister of state. The people have found out that I am in disgrace; my few well-wishers are afraid to speak to me: some have turned out of the way to avoid me; others have desired that I would not take it ill if they seemed not to know me when we should meet. The servant that used to wash my linen, sent it back unwashed. It was great cause of triumph that I was forbidden the use of Mr. Oglethorpe's things, which in effect debarred me of most of the conveniences, if not the necessaries of life. I sometimes pitied them, and sometimes diverted myself with the odd expressions of their contempt; but I found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of obloquy at Oxford."

John, meantime, being relieved by Ingham at Savannah, embarked in a sort of flat-bottomed barge called a pettiagaw for Frederica. At night he wrapt himself from head to foot in a large cloak to keep off the sand flies (for they were anchored near an island), and lay down on the quarter-deck. About midnight

he was greatly astonished by finding himself under water: he had rolled overboard, and in so sound a sleep that he did not wake while falling; his presence of mind, which never forsook him, served him here in good stead, and swimming round to the other side of the vessel where there was a boat tied, he climbed up by the rope. Contrary winds delayed him six days on the passage. Charles began to recover from the moment of his brother's arrival. In his natural indignation at the treatment which he received, he had resolved rather to perish for want of necessaries, than submit to ask for them; by John's advice, however, he departed from this resolution, and the way to reconciliation was thus opened. Wesley remained about a week at Frederica. A few days after his departure, Mr. Oglethorpe sent for Charles, and a remarkable scene ensued. The governor began by saying he had taken some pains to satisfy his brother, but in vain. "It matters not," said he. "I am now going to death: you will see me no more. Take this ring, and carry it to Mr. V.: if there be a friend to be depended on, he is one. His interest is next to Sir Robert's: whatever you ask within his power, he will do for you, your brother, and family. I have expected death for some days. These letters show that the Spaniards have long been seducing our allies, and intend to cut us off at a blow. I fall by my friends on whom I depended to send their promised succours. But death is nothing to me: he will pursue all my designs, and to him I recommend them and you." He then gave him a diamond ring. Charles Wesley, who had little expected such an address, took it, and replied, "If I am speaking to you for the last time, hear what you will

quickly know to be a truth, as soon as you are entered on a separate state. This ring I shall never make use of for myself. I have no worldly hopes: I have renounced the world: life is bitterness to me: I came hither to lay it down. You have been deceived as well as I. I protest my innocence of the crimes I am charged with, and think myself now at liberty to tell you what I thought never to have uttered." The explanation into which he then entered, so satisfied Oglethorpe, that his feelings were entirely changed: all his old love and confidence returned; and he embraced Charles and kissed him with the most cordial affection. They went together to the boat, where he waited some minutes for his sword: a mourning sword was twice brought him, which he twice refused to take; at last they brought his own: it had been his father's. "With this sword," said he, "I was never yet unsuccessful." When the boat pushed off, Charles Wesley ran along the shore to see his last of him. Oglethorpe seeing him and two other persons run after him, stopt the boat, and asked if they wanted any thing. One of them, the officer whom he had left with the command, desired his last orders: Charles then said, "God is with you: go forth, *Christo duce et auspice Christo.*" Oglethorpe replied, "You have some verses of mine: you there see my thoughts of success." The boat then moved off, and Charles remained praying that God would save him from death and wash away all his sins.

On the fifth day, Oglethorpe returned in safety. An enemy's squadron, of three large ships and four smaller, had been for three weeks endeavouring to make a descent, but the wind continued against them, till they could wait no longer. Charles returned him the ring.

"When I gave it you," said the governor, "I never expected to see you again, but I thought it would be of service to your brother and you. I had many omens of my death, but God has been pleased to preserve a life which was never valuable to me, and yet in the continuance of it, I thank God I can rejoice." He then talked of the strangeness of his deliverance, when betrayed, as it appeared, on all sides, and without human support; and he condemned himself for his late conduct, imputing it, however, to want of time for consideration, and the state of his mind. "I longed, sir," said Charles, "to see you once more, that I might tell you some things before we finally parted: but then I considered that if you died you would know them all in a moment." Oglethorpe replied, "I know not whether separate spirits regard our little concerns; if they do, it is as men regard the follies of their childhood, or I my late passionateness." About three months afterwards, Mr. Oglethorpe sent him to England with despatches, and followed him thither in the autumn of the same year.

At the beginning of the ensuing year, it was determined that Ingham should go to England also, and endeavour to bring over some of their friends to assist them. When Wesley had been twelve months in Georgia, he sent to the trustees an account of the expenses for that time, for himself and Delamotte, which, deducting buildings and journeys, amounted only to £44 4*s.* 4*d.* A salary of £50 was allowed for his maintenance, which he had resolved not to accept, thinking his fellowship sufficient for him; but his brother Samuel expostulated with him upon the injustice of such conduct, both to himself and to those who should come after him.

These arguments were too reasonable to be resisted, especially when Wesley was looking to an event which would have deprived him of his income from college.

Sophia Causton, the niece of the chief magistrate at Savannah, had fixed her eyes upon Wesley; and it is said that Mr. Oglethorpe wished to bring about a marriage between them, thinking it the likeliest means of reclaiming him from those eccentricities which stood in the way of his usefulness. She was a woman of fine person, polished manners, and cultivated mind, and was easily led to bear her part in a design which was to cure an excellent man of his extravagances, and give her a good husband. Accordingly she was introduced to him as one suffering under a wounded spirit, and inquiring after the way of eternal life. Nor was it enough to place herself thus in a more particular manner under his spiritual guidance: she became his pupil also, like another Heloisa. She dressed always in white, and with the utmost simplicity, to please his taste; and when in consequence of his having taken meat and wine one day at the General's express desire, as a proof that he did not think the use of these things unlawful, he was seized with fever, and confined to his bed, she attended him night and day with incessant and sincere solicitude. Wesley's manner of life had hitherto estranged him from women, and he felt these attentions as it was designed that he should feel them. But she had a difficult part to act, and might well doubt whether with all his virtues it was likely that such a husband would make her happy. While she was at Frederica, he wrote to his brother Charles concerning her in language which strongly marks his anxiety; the letter was partly written in Greek, that it might not be exposed to impertinent

curiosity. It was to this purport—"I conjure you spare no time, no address or pains to learn the true cause of my friend's former grief. I much doubt you are in the right. God forbid that she should again err thus. Watch over, guard her as much as you possibly can. Write to me, how it behoves me to write to her." Here not being under Wesley's eye, her life was not regulated with the same reference to his opinion; and when he went to Frederica some weeks after his brother's departure, "he found her," he says, "scarce the shadow of what she was when he had left her." He endeavoured to convince her of this: the kind of remonstrance excited some pain and some pride; and in her resentment she told him she would return to England immediately. "I was at first a little surprised," says he, "but I soon recollected my spirits, and remembered my calling.

—— non me, qui cætera, vincet
Impetus; at rapido contrarius evehar orbi."

He had recourse to prayer, however, and to the exhortations of Ephrem Syrus, whom he thought at this time the most awakening writer of all the ancients; and after several fruitless attempts, he at length succeeded in dissuading her from what he called the fatal resolution of going to England. She went back with him to Savannah, and in a short time he believed she had recovered the ground which she had lost. This was the close of October. "In the beginning of December," he writes, "I advised Miss Sophy to sup earlier, and not immediately before she went to bed. She did so, and on this little circumstance, what an inconceivable train of consequences depend! not only all the colour

of remaining life for her, but perhaps my happiness too."

Notwithstanding this docility, Delamotte suspected that both her obedience and her devotion were merely assumed for the occasion; he therefore told Wesley what he thought of her artfulness and his simplicity, and plainly asked him if it was his intention to marry her. That he had formed this intention in his heart is beyond a doubt, but he had not declared it; the question embarrassed him, and he made no decisive answer; but being staggered by what Delamotte had said, he called upon the Moravian bishop. The bishop replied thus:—"Marriage is not unlawful. Whether it is expedient for you at this time, and whether this lady is a proper wife for you, ought to be maturely considered." The more he considered the more he was perplexed, so he propounded the matter to the elders of the Moravian Church. When he went to learn their determination, he found Delamotte sitting with the elders in full conclave assembled; and upon his proposing the question, the bishop replied: "We have considered your case; will you abide by our decision?" He made answer that he would. Then said the bishop, "We advise you to proceed no further in this business." Upon this Wesley replied, "The will of the Lord be done," and from that time, in perfect obedience to their decision, it is affirmed that he carefully avoided the lady's company, though he perceived what pain this change in his conduct gave her. Had the lady herself known that a consultation of Moravian elders had been held upon her case, whatever pain and whatever love she might have felt, would soon have given place to resentment.

Docile, however, as he had shown himself to his spiritual directors, his private diary shows what pain he felt in their decision, and that even when he thought it best for his salvation that the match should be broken off, he had not resolution to break it off himself, so that the point on his part was still undecided, when she put an end to his struggles by taking another husband. Passages in his private journal make this beyond a doubt.

His first consolation was derived from reflecting upon the part which he believed himself called to perform. Walking to one of the newly-settled lots, he says, "I plainly felt that had God given me such a retirement with the companion I desired, I should have forgotten the work for which I was born, and have set up my rest in this world." It was not long, however, before he began to find cause for consolation from the lady's character, which took its natural course, when she no longer acted with the view of pleasing him. "God," he says, "has shown me yet more of the greatness of my deliverance, by opening to me a new and unexpected scene of Miss Sophy's dissimulation. O never give me over to my own heart's desires, nor let me follow my own imaginations!" Some time afterwards, immediately after the communion, he mentioned to her something in her conduct which he thought reprehensible; no man but Wesley would have done so, after what had passed between them, but at this time his austere notions led him wrong in everything. The reproof irritated her, as it was likely to do, and she replied angrily, that she did not expect such usage from him, and turned abruptly away. At this time he was still upon friendly terms with her uncle Mr. Causton, the

chief magistrate in the colony, and one who had hitherto been among his best friends: he had attended him lately during a slow illness, with a kindness of which that gentleman appeared fully sensible, and Mrs. Causton, upon hearing what had now passed with her niece, endeavoured to excuse her to Wesley, expressed her sorrow for the affair, and desired him to tell her in writing what it was which he disapproved. The matter might easily have been ended here, if Wesley had so chosen; but his notions of clerical duty during this part of his life, would have qualified him in other ages to have played the part of Becket or of Hildebrand. What he wrote to the lady has never been made public; the temper in which it was written may be estimated by the letter which he previously sent to her uncle. "To this hour you have shown yourself my friend; I ever have and ever shall acknowledge it: and it is my earnest desire that He who hath hitherto given me this blessing would continue it still. But this cannot be unless you will allow me one request, which is not so easy a one as it appears,—*don't condemn me for doing in the execution of my office what I think it my duty to do.* If you can prevail upon yourself to allow me this, even when I act without respect of persons, I am persuaded there will never be, at least not long, any misunderstanding between us. For even those who seek it, shall, I trust, find no occasion against me, *except it be concerning the law of my* GOD." This curious note brought Mr. Causton to his house to ask how he could possibly think he should condemn him for executing any part of his office. Wesley replied, "Sir, what if I should think it the duty of my office to repel one of your family from the Holy Communion?" "If you

repel me or my wife," answered Causton, "I shall require a legal reason, but I shall trouble myself about none else; let them look to themselves."

These circumstances must needs have thrown the lady into considerable agitation; she miscarried: but though her aunt was now so incensed against Mr. Wesley as to impute this to his reproof and the letter which he had afterwards written, she herself was generous or just enough to declare that it was occasioned by anxiety during her husband's illness. Causton forbore from taking any part in the affair, and continued his usual friendly conduct towards the untractable chaplain: he, however, on the first Sunday in the ensuing month persisted in his purpose, and repelled her from the communion. The next day a warrant was issued against him for defaming Sophia Williamson, and refusing to administer to her the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in a public congregation without cause; for which injury the husband laid his damages at one thousand pounds. Upon this warrant, he was carried before the Recorder and one of the Bailiffs: there he maintained that the giving or refusing the Lord's Supper was a matter purely ecclesiastical; and, therefore, he would not acknowledge their power to interrogate him concerning it. The Bailiff, nevertheless, said he must appear at the next Court holden for Savannah; and Williamson desired that he might be required to give bail for his appearance; but the Bailiff replied, that Mr. Wesley's word was sufficient. Mr. Causton, still professing a regard to the friendship which had hitherto subsisted between them, required him to give the reasons for his conduct in the court-house, which Wesley refused, saying, he apprehended many ill consequences might arise from so

doing; "Let the cause," he said, "be laid before the trustees." The uncle now broke off all terms, and entered with great animosity into the business as a family quarrel, declaring he had drawn the sword, and would never sheath it till he had obtained satisfaction: and he called upon Wesley to give the reasons of his repelling her before the whole congregation. This he did accordingly, in writing to the lady herself, and in these words: "The rules whereby I proceed are these: so many as intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion shall signify their names to the Curate, at least some time the day before. This you did not do. And if any of these have done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the Curate shall advertise him that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented. If you offer yourself at the Lord's Table on Sunday, I will advertise you (as I have done more than once,) wherein you have done wrong. And when you have openly declared yourself to have truly repented, I will administer to you the mysteries of God."

This affair was now the whole business of Savannah. Causton was so far forgetful of what is due from man to man in civilised life, as to read Wesley's letters to the lady during the whole course of their intimacy, before all who chose to hear them, omitting such passages as did not exactly suit his purpose, and helping out others by a running comment. Wesley on his part, at the request of several of the communicants, drew up a statement of the case, and read it after the evening prayers in the open congregation; a conduct not less extraordinary, though less reprehensible than that of his adversary.

An affidavit was made by the lady, asserting that Mr. Wesley had many times proposed marriage to her, all which proposals she had rejected, and insinuating much more than it asserted. He desired a copy of it, and was told by Causton that he might have one from any of the newspapers in America; for they were bent upon the double object of blackening his character and driving him from the colony. A grand jury was summoned, consisting of fifty persons, no trifling proportion of the adult male population of Savannah: four and forty met; and Wesley complains that of these one was a Frenchman, who did not understand English, one a Papist, one a professed infidel, some twenty were Dissenters (all of course unfit persons to decide upon a question relating to church discipline), and several other persons who had personal quarrels with him, and had openly threatened to be revenged. Causton addressed them in an earnest speech, exhorting them to beware of spiritual tyranny, and to oppose the new and illegal authority which was usurped over their consciences: he then delivered in a list of grievances, which with some immaterial alterations was returned as a true bill, charging John Wesley with having "broken the laws of the realm, contrary to the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, his crown and dignity." The indictment contained ten counts, of which the first was for speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson against her husband's consent; the others relating to his repelling her from the communion, his division of the service, and his conduct respecting baptisms and burials. He appeared before the Court, and declared, that as nine of these counts related to ecclesiastical matters, they were not within the cognisance of that tribunal; but that which concerned speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson

was of a secular nature, he said, and therefore he desired that it might be tried upon the spot where the facts complained of had occurred. But it was in vain that he repeatedly demanded a hearing on this charge; and in this manner more than three months elapsed. During that time a donation of ten pounds from the Vice-Provost of Eton reached him, designed for his private use and for works of charity: when it arrived he had been several months without a shilling in the house, but not, he says, without peace, health, and contentment.

Indeed, he had still zealous friends in the colony. Even among the jurors, though every means was taken to select men who were likely to favour his accusers, and no means for prepossessing them against him were spared, twelve persons were found, who in a paper addressed to the trustees, protested against the indictment as a scheme for gratifying personal malice by blackening Mr. Wesley's character. The indictment was found toward the end of August, and it seems that its first effect was to make him think of leaving Savannah: but on September 10th he says in his private journal, "I laid aside the thoughts of going to England; thinking it more suitable to my calling, still to commend my cause to God, and not to be in haste to justify myself." When, however, another month had elapsed, and the business appeared no nearer its decision, he consulted his friends, "whether God did not call him to return to England?" The reason, he said, for which he had left his country had now no force; there was as yet no possibility of instructing the Indians, neither had he found or heard of any Indians on the continent of America who had the least desire of

being instructed.—But it is not for their desire that missionaries whose hearts have been intently set upon this good work have waited; and though the North American tribes have been found far less docile than those in the other part of the New Continent, still sufficient proof has been given both in Canada and New Zealand, that the labour of love was not lost upon them, when it was perseveringly pursued. Wesley could not find what he did not seek; other and greater labours were reserved for him: he was not to be a missionary himself, but a founder of missions, in which men more suitable for the work would find their proper and most meritorious employment. It will not be deemed superstitious thus to notice as remarkable the manner in which Wesley gave up the object for which he went to Georgia, without one serious effort for its accomplishment, and apparently without being conscious of any want of effort, or any change in himself.

As to Savannah, he said, he had never engaged himself either by word or letter, to remain there a day longer than he should judge convenient; nor had he taken charge of the people any otherwise than as in his passage to the heathen; he therefore looked upon himself to be fully discharged from that cure by the vacating of his primary design; and besides, there was a probability of his doing more service to that unhappy people in England, than he could do in Georgia, by representing the real state of the colony to the trustees without fear or favour. His friends, of whom the Moravians were probably the greater number, listened attentively to this reasoning; and after considering it well, were of opinion that he ought to go, but not yet. So for the present he laid aside the thought,

being persuaded that when the time was come, God would make the way plain before his face. Another six weeks elapsed, during which he appeared at two more courts, to no other purpose than to hear himself reviled in calumnious affidavits by Mr. Causton. Weary of this, he laid the case again before his friends, and they agreed with him now that it was proper he should depart. Accordingly he called upon Causton to give him notice of his intention, and obtain money for the expenses of his voyage; and he posted up a paper in the great square with these words,—"Whereas John Wesley designs shortly to set out for England, this is to desire those who have borrowed any books of him to return them as soon as they conveniently can." He fixed his departure for December 2nd, when he purposed to set out for Carolina about noon, the tide then serving: at ten o'clock on that morning the magistrate sent for him to say that he must not quit the province, because he had not answered the allegations brought against him. He replied, "that he had appeared in six or seven courts successively in order to answer them, and had not been suffered so to do, when he desired it time after time." They insisted nevertheless that he should not go unless he would give security to answer those allegations in their court. He asked what security; and after they had consulted together some two hours, the Recorder produced a bond engaging him under a penalty of fifty pounds, to appear at their court when he should be required; and he added that Mr. Williamson also required bail, that he should answer his action. Upon this he replied resolutely, that he would neither give bond nor bail, saying, "You know your business, and I know mine."

It is very certain that the magistrates desired nothing more than to make him withdraw; but in order to keep up appearances, and stigmatise his departure as if it were a flight from justice, they published an order that afternoon, requiring all the officers and sentinels to prevent him from leaving the colony, and forbidding any person to assist him so to do. This order was not meant to be obeyed. "Being now," he says, "only a prisoner at large in a place where I knew by experience every day would give fresh opportunity to procure evidence of words I never said, and actions I never did, I saw clearly the hour was come for leaving this place: and soon as evening prayers were over, about eight o'clock, the tide then serving, I shook off the dust of my feet, and left Georgia, after having preached the gospel there (not as I ought, but as I was able,) one year and nearly nine months."

He had abated somewhat of his rigorous mode of life; now he returned to what he calls his old simplicity of diet, and imputed to the change a relief from seasickness, which might more reasonably have been ascribed to continuance at sea. Wesley was never busier in the work of self-examination than during this homeward voyage.

At this time, in the fulness of his heart, he thus accused himself, and prayed for deliverance: "By the most infallible of proofs—inward feeling, I am convinced, 1. Of unbelief, having no such faith in Christ as will prevent my heart from being troubled; which it could not be if I believed in God, and rightly believed also in Him: 2. Of pride, throughout my life past, inasmuch as I thought I had, what I find I have not: 3. Of gross irrecollection, inasmuch as in a storm I cry to God every

moment, in a calm not : 4. Of levity and luxuriancy of spirit, recurring whenever the pressure is taken off, and appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most by the manner of speaking of my enemies. Lord save or I perish! Save me, 1. By such a faith as implies peace in life and in death: 2. By such humility as may fill my heart from this hour for ever, with a piercing uninterrupted sense, *Nihil est quod hactenus feci*, having evidently built without a foundation: 3. By such a recollection as may cry to Thee every moment, especially when all is calm: give me faith, or I die! give me a lowly spirit! otherwise, *mihi non sit suave vivere:* 4. By steadiness, seriousness, σεμνότης, sobriety of spirit, avoiding as fire every word that tendeth not to edifying, and never speaking of any who oppose me, or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face." In this state he roused himself and exhorted his fellow-travellers with all his might; but the seriousness with which he impressed them soon disappeared when he left them to themselves. A severe storm came on: at first he was afraid, but having found comfort in prayer, lay down at night with composure, and fell asleep. "About midnight," he says, "we were awaked by a confused noise of seas and wind and men's voices, the like to which I had never heard before. The sound of the sea breaking over and against the sides of the ship, I could compare to nothing but large cannon or American thunder. The rebounding, starting, quivering motion of the ship much resembled what is said of earthquakes. The captain was upon deck in an instant, but his men could not hear what he said. It blew a proper hurricane, which beginning at south-west, then went west, north-west, north, and in a quarter of an hour

round by the east to the south-west point again. At the same time the sea running, as they term it, mountains high, and that from many different points at once, the ship would not obey the helm, nor indeed could the steersman, through the violent rain, see the compass; so he was forced to let her run before the wind; and in half an hour the stress of the storm was over. About noon the next day it ceased."

While it continued Wesley made a resolution to apply his spiritual labours not only to the whole crew collectively, but to every separate individual; and in the performance of this resolution he recovered his former elasticity of spirit, feeling no more of that fearfulness and heaviness which had lately weighed him down.

The state of his mind at this time is peculiarly interesting, while it was thus agitated and impelled towards some vague object, as yet he knew not what, by the sense of duty and of power, and while those visitations of doubt were frequent, which darken the soul when they pass over it. "I went to America," he says, "to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? Who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion, I can talk well, nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near: but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled; nor can I say *to die is gain*. I think verily if the gospel be true, I am safe; for I not only have given and do give all my goods to feed the poor; I not only give my body to be burnt, drowned, or whatever else God shall appoint for me, but I follow after charity (though not as I ought, yet as I can), if haply I may attain it. I *now* believe the gospel is true. *I show my faith by my works*, by staking my all upon it.

I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me, sees I *would* be a Christian. Therefore, *are my ways not like other men's ways*: therefore, I have been, I am, I am content to be, *a bye-word, a proverb of reproach.* But in a storm I think, what if the gospel be not true? then thou art of all men most foolish. For what hast thou given thy goods, thy ease, thy friends, thy reputation, thy country, thy life? For what art thou wandering over the face of the earth? a dream? *a cunningly devised fable?* Oh, who will deliver me from this fear of death! What shall I do? Where shall I fly from it? Should I fight against it by thinking, or by not thinking of it? A wise man advised me some time since, 'Be still, and go on.' Perhaps this is best: to look upon it as my cross; when it comes, to let it humble me, and quicken all my good resolutions, especially that of praying without ceasing; and other times to take no thought about it, but quietly to go on in the work of the Lord." It is beautifully said by Sir Thomas Brown, "There is, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us: more of these no man hath known than myself, which I confess I conquered, not in a martial posture, but on my knees." What is remarkable in Wesley's case is that these misgivings of faith should have been felt by him chiefly in times of danger, which is directly contrary to general experience.

And now he reviewed the progress of his own religious life. "For many years I have been tossed about by various winds of doctrine. I asked long ago, 'What must I do to be saved?' The Scripture

answered, Keep the commandments, believe, hope, love.—I was early warned against laying, as the Papists do, too much stress on outward works, or on a faith without works, which, as it does not include, so it will never lead to true hope or charity. Nor am I sensible that to this hour, I have laid too much stress on either. But I fell among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, who magnified faith to such an amazing size, that it hid all the rest of the commandments. I did not then see that this was the natural effect of their overgrown fear of popery, being so terrified with the cry of merit and good works, that they plunged at once into the other extreme; in this labyrinth I was utterly lost, not being able to find out what the error was, nor yet to reconcile this uncouth hypothesis, either with Scripture or common sense. The English writers, such as Bishop Beveridge, Bishop Taylor, and Mr. Nelson, a little relieved me from these well-meaning wrong-headed Germans. Only when they interpreted Scripture in different ways, I was often much at a loss. And there was one thing much insisted on in Scripture,—the unity of the Church, which none of them, I thought, clearly explained. But it was not long before Providence brought me to those who showed me a sure rule of interpreting Scripture, *consensus veterum: Quod ab omnibus, quod ubique, quod semper creditum;* at the same time they sufficiently insisted upon a due regard to the one Church at all times and in all places. Nor was it long before I bent the bow too far the other way: by making antiquity a co-ordinate rather than sub-ordinate rule with Scripture; by admitting several doubtful writings; by extending antiquity too far; by believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient Church than ever were so;

by not considering that the decrees of a provincial synod could bind only that province, and the decrees of a general synod only those provinces whose representatives met therein; that most of those decrees were adapted to particular times and occasions, and consequently when those occasions ceased, must cease to bind even those provinces. These considerations insensibly stole upon me as I grew acquainted with the mystic writers, whose noble descriptions of union with God and internal religion made everything else appear mean, flat, and insipid. But in truth they made good works appear so too: yea, and faith itself, and what not? They gave me an entire new view of religion, nothing like any I had before. But alas! it was nothing like that religion which Christ and His apostles loved and taught. I had a plenary dispensation from all the commands of God; the form was thus: Love is all; all the commands beside are only means of love: you must choose those which you feel are means to you, and use them as long as they are so. Thus were all the bands burst at once; and though I could never fully come into this, nor contentedly omit what God enjoined, yet, I know not how, I fluctuated between obedience and disobedience. I had no heart, no vigour, no zeal in obeying, continually doubting whether I was right or wrong, and never out of perplexities and entanglements. Nor can I at this hour give a distinct account how or when I came a little back toward the right way; only my present sense is this, all the other enemies of Christianity are triflers, the mystics are the most dangerous; they stab it in the vitals, and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them."

Having landed at Deal, the returning missionary

recorded solemnly his own self-condemnation and sense of his own imperfect faith. "It is now," he said, "two years and almost four months since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learnt myself meantime? Why,—what I the least of all suspected,—that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. *I am not mad,* though I thus speak, but *I speak the words of truth and soberness*: if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see that as I am, so are they. Are they read in philosophy? So was I. In antient or modern tongues? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same could I do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold, I gave all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labour as well as their substance? I have laboured more abundantly than them all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country. I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange lands; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this (be it more or less, it matters not) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did, or can, *know*, *say*, *give*, *do*, or *suffer*, justify me in His sight? If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by the *Law and Testimony*, all these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ, they are holy, and just, and good, yet without it are *dung* and *dross*. Thus then have I learned, in the ends of the earth, that my whole heart is

altogether corrupt and abominable, and consequently my whole life :—that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, which are more in number than the hairs of my head, that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves :—that having the sentence of death in my heart, and nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope but that of being justified freely *through the redemption that is in Jesus* ;—but that if I seek I shall find Christ, and be found in Him. If it be said, that I have faith, (for many such things have I heard from many miserable comforters,) I answer, so have the devils,—*a sort* of faith ; but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. The faith I want is a sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God. I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it, who have it not) ; for whosoever hath it is *freed from sin ; the whole body of sin is destroyed* in him : he is freed from fear, *having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.* And he is freed from doubt, having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him, which Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God."

Yet on reflecting upon the time which he had spent in Georgia, he saw many reasons to bless God for having carried him into that strange land. There he had been humbled and proved,—there he had learned to know what was in his heart : there the passage had been opened for him to the writings of holy men in the

German, Spanish, and Italian tongues; for he acquired the Spanish in order to converse with his Jewish parishioners, and read prayers in Italian to a few Vaudois: and there he had been introduced to the church of Herrnhut,—an event of considerable importance to his future life.

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS OF WHITEFIELD DURING WESLEY'S ABSENCE. —WESLEY A PUPIL OF THE MORAVIANS.

WHITEFIELD sailed from the Downs for Georgia a few hours only before the vessel which brought Wesley back from thence cast anchor there. The ships passed in sight of each other, but neither of these remarkable men knew that so dear a friend was on the deck at which he was gazing. But when Wesley landed he learned that his coadjutor was on board the vessel in the offing: it was still possible to communicate with him; and Whitefield was not a little suprised at receiving a letter which contained these words: "When I saw God by the wind which was carrying you out brought me in, I asked counsel of God. His answer you have inclosed." The inclosure was a slip of paper, with this sentence, "Let him return to London." Wesley doubting, from his own experience, whether his friend could be so usefully employed in America as in England, had referred the question to chance, in which at that time he trusted implicitly, and this was the lot which he had drawn. But Whitefield, who never seems to have fallen into this superstition, was persuaded that

he was called to Georgia; and even if he had not felt that impression upon his mind, the inconsistency of returning to London in obedience to a lot, which had been drawn without his consent or knowledge, and breaking the engagements which he had formed, would have been glaring, and the inconvenience not inconsiderable. He betook himself to prayer: the story of the prophet in the book of Kings came forcibly to his recollection, how he turned back from his appointed course, because another prophet told him it was the will of the Lord that he should do so, and for that reason a lion met him by the way. So he proceeded on his voyage. The previous career of the disciple in England, during the master's absence in America, must now be retraced.

Less clear, less logical, less formed for command and legislation than Wesley, Whitefield was of a more ardent nature, and arrived at the end of his spiritual course before Wesley had obtained sight of the goal. It was soon after his introduction to the two brothers that he thus outran them. In reading a treatise, entitled *The Life of God in the Soul of man*, wherein he found it inserted, that true religion is an union of the soul with God or Christ, formed within us, a ray of divine light, he says, instantaneously darted in upon him, and from that moment he knew that he must be a new creature. But in seeking to attain that religious state which brings with it the peace that passeth all understanding, the vehemence of his disposition led him into greater excesses than any of his compeers at Oxford. He describes himself as having all sensible comforts withdrawn from him, overwhelmed with a horrible fearfulness and dread, all power of meditation,

or even thinking, taken away, his memory gone, his whole soul barren and dry, and his sensations, as he imagined, like those of a man locked up in iron armour. "Whenever I knelt down," he says, "I felt great pressures both on soul and body; and have often prayed under the weight of them till the sweat came through me. God only knows how many nights I have lain upon my bed groaning under what I felt. Whole days and weeks have I spent in lying prostrate on the ground in silent or vocal prayer." In this state he began to practise austerities, such as the Romish superstition encourages: he chose the worst food, and affected mean apparel; he made himself remarkable by leaving off powder in his hair, when every one else was powdered, because he thought it unbecoming a penitent; and he wore woollen gloves, a patched gown and dirty shoes, as visible signs of humility. Such conduct drew upon him contempt, insult, and the more serious consequence, that part of that pay on which he depended for his support was taken from him by men who did not choose to be served by so slovenly a servitor. Other excesses injured his health: he would kneel under the trees in Christ Church, walk in silent prayer, shivering the while with cold, till the great bell summoned him to his college for the night: he exposed himself to cold in the morning till his hands were quite black: he kept Lent so strictly, that, except on Saturdays and Sundays, his only food was coarse bread and sage tea, without sugar. The end of this was, that before the termination of the forty days he had scarcely strength enough left to creep upstairs, and was under a physician for many weeks.

At the close of the severe illness which he had thus

brought on himself, a happy change of mind confirmed his returning health.

The Wesleys at this time were in Georgia; and some person, who feared lest the little society which they had formed at Oxford should be broken up and totally dissolved for want of a superintendent, had written to a certain Sir John Philips of London, who was ready to assist in religious works with his purse, and recommended Whitefield as a proper person to be encouraged and patronised more especially for this purpose. Sir John immediately gave him an annuity of £20, and promised to make it £30, if he would continue at Oxford;—for if this place could be leavened with the vital spirit of religion, it would be like medicating the waters at their spring. His illness rendered it expedient for him to change the air; and he went accordingly to his native city, where, laying aside all other books, he devoted himself to the study of the Scriptures, reading them upon his knees, and praying over every line and word.

His general character, his demeanour at church, his visiting the poor, and praying with the prisoners, attracted the notice of Dr. Benson, the then Bishop of Gloucester, who sent for him one day after the evening service, and having asked his age, which was little more than twenty-one, told him, that although he had resolved not to ordain any one under three-and-twenty, he should think it his duty to ordain him whenever he came for holy orders. Whitefield himself had felt a proper degree of fear at undertaking so sacred an office; his repugnance was now overruled by this encouragement, and by the persuasion of his friends; and as he preferred remaining at Oxford, Sir John Philips's allow-

ance was held a sufficient title by the bishop, who would otherwise have provided him with a cure. Whitefield prepared himself by abstinence and prayer; and on the Saturday eve, retiring to a hill near the town, he there prayed fervently for about two hours, in behalf of himself and those who were to enter into holy orders at the same time. On the following morning he was ordained. "I trust," he says, "I answered to every question from the bottom of my heart; and heartily prayed that God might say Amen. And when the bishop laid his hands upon my head, if my vile heart doth not deceive me, I offered up my whole spirit, soul and body, to the service of God's sanctuary."—"Let come what will, life or death, depth or height, I shall henceforwards live like one who this day, in the presence of men and angels, took the Holy Sacrament, upon the profession of being inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon me that ministration in the church. I can call heaven and earth to witness, that when the bishop laid his hand upon me, I gave myself up to be a martyr for Him who hung upon the cross for me. Known unto Him are all future events and contingencies: I have thrown myself blindfold, and, I trust, without reserve, into His Almighty hands." Such were his feelings at the hour, and they were not belied by the whole tenor of his after-life.

Bishop Benson appears to have felt a sincere regard for the young man whom he had thus ordained, little aware of the course which he was designed to run. Whitefield speaks at this time of having received from the good prelate another present of five guineas; "a great supply," he says, "for one who had not a guinea in the world." He began with as small a stock of

sermons as of worldly wealth: it had been his intention to have prepared at least a hundred wherewith to commence his ministry;—he found himself with only one: it proved a fruitful one; for having lent it to a neighbouring clergyman, to convince him how unfit he was, as he really believed himself to be, for the work of preaching, the clergyman divided it into two, which he preached morning and evening to his congregation, and sent it back with a guinea for its use. With this sermon he first appeared in the pulpit, in the church of St. Mary de Crypt, where he had been baptised, and where he had first received the sacrament. Curiosity had brought together a large congregation; and he now, he says, felt the unspeakable advantage of having been accustomed to public speaking when a boy at school, and of exhorting and teaching the prisoners and poor people at Oxford. More than this, he felt what he believed to be a sense of the Divine presence, and kindling as he went on in this belief, spake, as he thought, with some degree of gospel authority. A few of his hearers mocked, but upon the greater number a strong impression was produced, and complaint was made to the bishop that fifteen persons had been driven mad by the sermon. The good man replied, he wished the madness might not be forgotten before the next Sunday.

That same week he returned to Oxford, took his degree, and continued to visit the prisoners, and inspect two or three charity schools which were supported by the Methodists. With this state of life he was more than contented, and thought of continuing in the university at least for some years, that he might complete his studies, and do what good he might among the gownsmen; to

convert one of them would be as much as converting a whole parish. From thence, however, he was invited ere long to officiate at the Tower chapel, in London, during the absence of the curate. It was a summons which he obeyed with fear and trembling; but he was soon made sensible of his power; for though the first time he entered a pulpit in the metropolis the congregation seemed disposed to sneer at him on account of his youth, they grew serious during his discourse, showed him great tokens of respect as he came down, and blessed him as he passed along, while inquiry was made on every side, from one to another, who he was. Two months he continued in London, reading prayers every evening at Wapping chapel, and twice a week at the Tower, preaching and catechising there once; preaching every Tuesday at Ludgate Prison, and daily visiting the soldiers in the infirmary and barracks. The chapel was crowded when he preached; persons came from different parts of the town to hear him, and proof enough was given that an earnest minister will make an attentive congregation.

Having returned to Oxford, the Society grew under his care, and friends were not wanting to provide for their temporal support. Lady Betty Hastings allowed small exhibitions to some of his disciples; he himself received some marks of well-bestowed bounty, and was entrusted also with money for the poor. It happened after a while that Mr. Kinchin, the minister of Dummer, in Hampshire, being likely to be chosen Dean of Corpus Christi College, invited him to officiate in his parish while he went to Oxford, till the election should be decided. Here Whitefield found himself among poor and illiterate people, and his proud heart, he says, could

not at first brook the change; he would have given the world for one of his Oxford friends, and "mourned for want of them like a dove." He found, however, in one of Mr. Law's books a fictitious character held up for imitation: this ideal being served him for a friend; and he had soon full satisfaction, as well as full employment, in pursuing the same round of duties as his predecessor. For the people had been taught by their pastor to attend public prayers twice a day; in the morning before they went to work, and in the evening after they returned from it: their zealous minister had also been accustomed to catechise the children daily, and visit his parishioners from house to house. In pursuance of this plan, Whitefield allotted eight hours to these offices, eight for study and retirement, and eight for the necessities of nature: he soon learnt to love the people among whom he laboured, and derived from their society a greater improvement than books could have given him.

While he was in London, some letters from Ingham and the Wesleys had made him long to follow them to Georgia: but when he opened these desires to his friends, they persuaded him that labourers were wanting at home; that he had no visible call abroad; and that it was his duty to wait and see what Providence might point out for him,—not to do anything rashly. He now learnt that Charles Wesley was come over to procure assistance; and though Charles did not invite him to the undertaking, yet he wrote in terms which made it evident that he was in his thoughts, as a proper person. Soon afterwards came a letter from John. "Only Mr. Delamotte is with me," he said, "till God shall stir up the hearts of some of His servants, who, putting their lives in

His hands, shall come over and help us, where the harvest is so great, and the labourers so few. What if thou art the man, Mr. Whitefield?" In another letter it was said, "Do you ask me what you shall have?—Food to eat, and raiment to put on; a house to lay your head in, such as your Lord had not; and a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Upon reading this, his heart, he says, leaped within him, and, as it were, echoed to the call. The desire thus formed soon ripened into a purpose, for which all circumstances seemed favourable. Mr. Kinchin had been elected Dean, and must therefore reside at College; he would take upon him the charge of the prisoners: Harvey was ready to supply his place in the curacy; there were many Indians in Georgia,—for their sake it was a matter of great importance that serious clergymen should be sent over: there he should find Wesley, his spiritual teacher and dear friend; a sea voyage, too, might not improbably be helpful to his weakened constitution. Thus he reasoned, finding in every circumstance something which flattered his purpose: and having strengthened it by prayer into a settled resolution, which he knew could never be carried into effect if he "conferred with flesh and blood," he wrote to his relations at Gloucester, telling them his design, and saying, that if they would promise not to dissuade him, he would visit them to take his leave; but otherwise he would embark without seeing them, for he knew his own weakness.

Herein he acted wisely; but the promise which he extorted was not strictly observed: his aged mother wept sorely; and others, who had no such cause to justify their interference, represented to him what "pretty preferment" he might have if he would stay at home. The

bishop approved his determination, received him like a father, as he always did, and doubted not but that God would bless him, and that he would do much good abroad. From Gloucester he went to bid his friends at Bristol farewell. Here he was held in high honour: the mayor appointed him to preach before the corporation: Quakers, Baptists, Presbyterians, people of all denominations, flocked to hear him; the churches were as full on week-days as they used to be on Sundays; and on Sundays crowds were obliged to go away for want of room. "The whole city," he said, "seemed to be alarmed." But though he says that "the Word was sharper than a two-edged sword, and that the doctrine of the New Birth made its way like lightning into the hearers' consciences," the doctrine had not yet assumed a fanatic tone, and produced no extravagance in public.

He himself, however, was in a state of high enthusiasm. Having been accepted by General Oglethorpe, and the trustees, and presented to the Bishop of London and the Primate, and finding that it would be some months before the vessel in which he was to embark would be ready, he went for a while to serve the church of one of his friends at Stonehouse, in his native county; and there he describes the habitual exaltation of his mind in glowing language. Uncommon manifestations, he says, were granted him from above. Early in the morning, at noon-day, evening, and midnight,—nay, all the day long, did the Redeemer visit and refresh his heart. Could the trees of the wood speak, they would tell what sweet communion he and his Christian brethren had under their shade enjoyed with their God. "Sometimes as I have been walking," he continues, "my soul would make such sallies, that I thought it would go out

of the body. At other times I would be so overpowered with a sense of God's infinite majesty, that I would be constrained to throw myself prostrate on the ground, and offer my soul as a blank in His hands, to write on it what He pleased. One night was a time never to be forgotten. It happened to lighten exceedingly. I had been expounding to many people, and some being afraid to go home, I thought it my duty to accompany them, and improve the occasion, to stir them up to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man. In my return to the parsonage, whilst others were rising from their beds, and frightened almost to death to see the lightning run upon the ground, and shine from one part of the heaven unto the other, I and another, a poor but pious countryman, were in the field, praising, praying to, and exulting in our God, and longing for that time when Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in a flame of fire! Oh that my soul may be in a like frame when He shall actually come to call me!"

From hence he went again to Bristol, having received many and pressing invitations. Multitudes came out on foot to meet him, and some in coaches, a mile without the city; and the people saluted and blessed him as he passed along the street. He preached about five times a week to such congregations, that it was with great difficulty he could make way along the crowded aisles to the reading-desk. "Some hung upon the rails of the organ-loft, others climbed upon the leads of the church, and altogether made the church so hot with their breath, that the steam would fall from the pillars like drops of rain." When he preached his farewell sermon, and said to the people that perhaps they might see his face no more, high and low, young and old, burst into tears.

Multitudes after the sermon followed him home weeping: the next day he was employed from seven in the morning till midnight in talking and giving spiritual advice to awakened hearers; and he left Bristol secretly in the middle of the night, to avoid the ceremony of being escorted by horsemen and coaches out of the town.

The man who produced this extraordinary effect had many natural advantages. He was something above the middle stature, well proportioned, though at that time slender, and remarkable for a native gracefulness of manner. His complexion was very fair, his features regular, his eyes small and lively, of a dark blue colour: in recovering from the measles he had contracted a squint with one of them; but this peculiarity rather rendered the expression of his countenance more rememberable, than in any degree lessened the effect of its uncommon sweetness. His voice excelled both in melody and compass, and its fine modulations were happily accompanied by that grace of action which he possessed in an eminent degree, and which has been said to be the chief requisite of an orator. An ignorant man described his eloquence oddly but strikingly, when he said, that Mr. Whitefield preached like a lion.

The same flood of popularity followed him in London. He was invited to preach at Cripplegate, St. Anne's, and Foster Lane churches, at six on Sunday mornings, and to assist in administering the sacrament: so many attended, that they were obliged to consecrate fresh elements twice or thrice, and the stewards found it difficult to carry the offerings to the communion table. Such an orator was soon applied to by the managers of various charities; and as his stay was to be so short, they obtained the use of the churches on week-days.

It was necessary to place constables at the doors within and without, such multitudes assembled; and on Sunday mornings in the latter months of the year, long before day, you might see the streets filled with people going to hear him, with lanterns in their hands. Above a thousand pounds were collected for the charity children by his preaching—in those days a prodigious sum, larger collections being made than had ever before been known on like occasions. A paragraph was published in one of the newspapers, speaking of his success, and announcing where he was to preach next: he sent to the printer, requesting that nothing of this kind might be inserted again; the fellow replied, that he was paid for doing it, and that he would not lose two shillings for anybody. The nearer the time of his departure approached, the more eager were the people to hear him, and the more warmly they expressed their admiration and love for the preacher. They stopped him in the aisles and embraced him; they waited upon him at his lodgings to lay open their souls; they begged religious books of him, and entreated him to write their names with his own hand: and when he preached his farewell sermon, here, as at Bristol, the whole congregation wept and sobbed aloud. At the end of the year he left London, and embarked at Gravesend for Georgia.

This unexampled popularity excited some jealousy in a part of the clergy, and in others a more reasonable inquiry concerning the means whereby it was obtained. Complaints were made that the crowds who followed him left no room for the parishioners, and spoiled the pews; and he was compelled to print the sermon on the Nature and Necessity of our Regeneration, or New Birth in Christ Jesus, through the importunity of friends,

he says, and the aspersions of enemies. It was reported in London that the bishop intended to silence him, upon the complaint of the clergy. In consequence of this report, he waited upon the bishop, and asked whether any such complaint had been lodged. Being satisfactorily answered in the negative, he asked whether any objection could be made against his doctrine; the bishop replied, no; he knew a clergyman who had heard him preach a plain scriptural sermon. He then asked whether his lordship would give him a licence; and the bishop avoided a direct reply, by saying that he needed none, for he was going to Georgia. Evidently he thought this a happy destination for one whose fervent spirit was likely to lead him into extravagances of doctrine as well as of life; for sometimes he scarcely allowed himself an hour's sleep, and once he spent a whole night among his disciples in prayer and praise. His frequent intercourse with the more serious Dissenters gave cause of offence; for the evils which Puritanism had brought upon this kingdom were at that time neither forgotten nor forgiven. He "found their conversation savoury," and judged rightly, that the best way to bring them over was not by bigotry and railing, but by moderation and love, and undissembled holiness of life. And on their part they told him, that if the doctrine of the New Birth and Justification by Faith were powerfully preached in the Church, there would be but few Dissenters in England. On the other hand, the manner in which he dwelt upon this doctrine alarmed some of the clergy, who apprehended the consequences; and on this account he was informed, that if he continued in that strain, they would not allow him to preach any more in their pulpits.

Doubtless those persons who felt and reasoned thus, rejoiced in Whitefield's departure to a country where the whole force of his enthusiasm might safely expend itself. But in all stirring seasons, when any great changes are to be operated, either in the sphere of human knowledge or of human actions, agents enough are ready to appear; and those men who become for posterity the great landmarks of their age, receive their bias from the times in which they live, and the circumstances in which they are placed, before they themselves give the directing impulse. It is apparent, that though the Wesleys should never have existed, Whitefield would have given birth to Methodism:—and now when Whitefield, having excited this powerful sensation in London, had departed for Georgia, to the joy of those who dreaded the excesses of his zeal, no sooner had he left the metropolis than Wesley arrived there, to deepen and widen the impression which Whitefield had made. Had their measures been concerted, they could not more entirely have accorded. The first sermon which Wesley preached was upon these strong words: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"; and though he himself had not yet reached the same stage in his progress as his more ardent coadjutor, the discourse was so high-strained, that he was informed he was not to preach again in that pulpit.

This was on the second day after his arrival in London. Two days afterwards, he met, at the house of a Dutch merchant, three Moravian brethen, by name Wenceslaus Neisser, George Schulius, and Peter Boehler; all these were just arrived from Germany, and the two latter were on their way to Georgia. He marks the day in his Journal as much to be remembered on account of this

meeting. On the next Sunday he preached at St. Andrew's, Holborn, and there also was informed that he was to preach no more. In the course of the week he went to Oxford, whither Peter Boehler accompanied him, and where he found only one of the little Society which he had formed there; the rest having been called to their several stations in the world.

This man, a person of no ordinary powers of mind, became Wesley's teacher: it is no slight proof of his commanding intellect, that he was listened to as such; and by him, "In the hands of the great God," says Wesley, "I was clearly convinced of unbelief,—of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." A scruple immediately occurred to him, whether he ought not to leave off preaching,—for how could he preach to others who had not faith himself? Boehler was consulted whether he should leave it off, and answered, "By no means." "But what can I preach?" said Wesley. The Moravian replied, "Preach faith *till* you have it; and then, *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith." Accordingly he began to preach this doctrine, though, he says, his soul started back from the work.

He had a little before resolved, and written down the resolution as a covenant with himself, that he would use absolute openness and unreserve towards all whom he should converse with; that he would labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behaviour, nor in laughter, no, not for a moment; and that he would speak no word, and take no pleasure, which did not tend to the glory of God. In this spirit he began to exhort the hostess or the servants at an inn, the chance company with whom he was set at meat, and the traveller with whom he fell in on the

road; if a passing salutation were exchanged, a word of religious exhortation was added.

Having returned to Oxford, and being at a meeting of his religious friends, his heart was so full that he could not confine himself to the forms of prayer which they were accustomed to use at such times; and from that time forth he resolved to pray indifferently, with or without form, as the occasion and the impulse might indicate. Here he met Peter Boehler again; and was more and more amazed by the account the Moravian gave of the fruits of living faith, and the holiness and happiness wherewith, he affirmed, it was attended. The next morning he began his Greek Testament, "resolving to abide by the law and the testimony, and being confident that God would thereby show him whether this doctrine was of God." After a few weeks they met once more in London, and Wesley assented to what he said of faith, but was as yet unable to comprehend how this faith could be given instantaneously, as Boehler maintained; for hitherto he had had no conception of that perpetual and individual revelation which is now the doctrine of his sect. He could not understand "how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost." But seeing Boehler in a happier state of mind than himself, he regarded him as having attained nearer to Christian perfection; and the Moravians, from the hour that he became acquainted with them, had evidently obtained a strong ascendancy over him. He searched the Scriptures again, touching the difference between them, the point upon which he halted; and examining more particularly the Acts of the Apostles, he says, that he was utterly astonished at finding scarcely

any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions. "Scarce any other so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the New Birth." —Is it possible that a man of Wesley's acuteness should have studied the Scriptures as he had studied them, till the age of five-and-thirty, without perceiving that the conversions which they record are instantaneous? and is it possible, that he should not now have perceived that they were necessarily instantaneous, because they were produced by plain miracles?

His last retreat was, that although the Almighty had wrought thus in the first ages of the Church, the times were changed, and what reason was there for supposing that He worked in the same manner now? "But," he says, "I was beat out of this retreat too by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God had thus wrought in themselves; giving them in a moment such a faith in the blood of His Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing, I could now only cry out, Lord, help Thou my unbelief!" In after life, when Wesley looked back upon this part of his progress, he concluded that he had then the faith of a servant, though not of a son. At the time he believed himself to be without faith; Charles was angry at the language which he held, for Charles had not kept pace with him in these later changes of opinion, and told him he did not know what mischief he had done by talking thus. "And indeed," says Wesley, as if contemplating with exultation the career which he was to run, "it did please God to kindle a fire, which I trust shall never be extinguished."

While he was in this state of mind, between forty

and fifty persons—for so many, including the Moravians, were now collected in London—agreed to meet together weekly, and drew up the fundamental rules of their Society "in obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Boehler"; in such estimation did Wesley at this time hold his spiritual master. They were to be divided into several bands or little companies, none consisting of fewer than five, or more than ten persons; in these bands every one in order engaged to speak as freely, plainly, and concisely as he could, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances since the last meeting. On Wednesday evenings, at eight o'clock, all the bands were to have a conference, beginning and ending with hymns and prayer. Any person who desired admission into this Society was to be asked, what were his motives, whether he would be entirely open, using no kind of reserve, and whether he objected to any of the rules. When he should be proposed, every one present who felt any objection to his admission, should state it fairly and fully: they who were received on trial were to be formed into distinct bands, and some experienced person chosen to assist them; and if no objection appeared to them after two months, they might then be admitted into the Society. Every fourth Saturday was to be observed as a day of general intercession; and on the Sunday seven-night following, a general love-feast should be held, from seven till ten in the evening. The last article provided that no member should be allowed to act in anything contrary to any order of the Society, and that any person who did not conform to those orders after being thrice admonished, should no longer be esteemed a member.

These rules were in the spirit of the Moravian institutions, for Wesley was now united with the Brethren in doctrine, as far as he understood their doctrine, and well disposed to many parts of their discipline. Charles also now yielded to Peter Boehler's commanding abilities, and was by him persuaded of the necessity of a faith differing from anything which he had yet felt or imagined. The day after he had won this victory, Boehler left London to embark for Georgia. "Oh, what a work," says Wesley, "has God begun since his coming into England! Such a one as shall never come to an end, till Heaven and earth pass away!"

His brother, who had been longer in acknowledging the want of efficient faith, attained it first. "I received," says Wesley, "the surprising news that he had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength (though it was just after a second return of pleurisy) returned also from that hour. Who is so great a God as our God?" He continued himself the three following days under a continual sense of sorrow and heaviness:—this was his language;—"Oh, why is it that so great, so wise, so holy a God will use such an instrument as me! Lord, let the dead bury their dead! But wilt Thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, Thou sendest whom Thou *wilt* send, and showest mercy by whom Thou *wilt* show mercy. Amen! Be it then according to Thy will! If Thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils." And again he thus expressed himself: "I feel that I am *sold under sin*. I know that I deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers, need an atonement for themselves. I have nothing to plead.—God is holy, I am unholy.—God is a consuming fire, I am altogether

a sinner, meet to be consumed.—Yet I hear a voice,—Believe, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth is passed from death unto life—Oh, let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know.—Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but Thee! Draw us after Thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy in believing, and let nothing separate us from Thy love in time or eternity." This was his state till Wednesday, May 24th, a remarkable day in the history of Methodism, for upon that day he dates his conversion,—a point, say his official biographers, of the utmost magnitude, not only with respect to himself, but to others.

On the evening of that day he went very unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate Street, where one of the assembly was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans.—What followed is considered by his disciples as being of deep importance; it may therefore best be given in his own words: "About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed; I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, This cannot be faith, for where is thy joy?"—How many a thought arising from that instinctive logic which is grounded on common sense, has

been fathered upon the personified principle of evil! Here was a plain contradiction in terms—an assurance which had not assured him. He returned home, and was buffeted with temptations: he cried out and they fled away; they returned again and again. "I as often lifted up my eyes," he says, "and He sent me help from His holy place. And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting, with all my might under the law, as well as under grace: but then I was sometimes, if not often, conquered; now I was always conqueror."

Before Samuel Wesley removed to Tiverton, his house in Dean's Yard had been a home for John and Charles whenever they went to London. After his removal, a family of the name of Hutton, who were much attached to him, desired that his brothers would make the same use of their house, and accordingly Charles went there on his return from Georgia, and John also. When, however, they were proceeding fast toward the delirious stage of enthusiasm, Charles chose to take up his quarters with a poor brazier in Little Britain, that the brazier might help him forward in his conversion. A few days after John also had been converted, as he termed it, when Mr. Hutton had finished a sermon, which he was reading on a Sunday evening to his family and his guests, John stood up, and to their utter astonishment assured them that he had never been a Christian till within the last five days; that he was perfectly certain of this, and that the only way for them to become Christians was to believe and confess that they were not so now. Hutton, who was exceedingly surprised at such a speech, only replied,

"Have a care, Mr. Wesley, how you despise the benefits received by the two sacraments!"—But when he repeated the assertion at supper, in Mrs. Hutton's presence, she made answer with female readiness, "If you were not a Christian ever since I knew you, you was a great hypocrite, for you made us all believe you were one." He replied, "That when we had renounced everything but faith, and then got into Christ, then, and not till then, had we any reason to believe we were Christians." Mr. Hutton asked him, "If faith only was necessary to save us, why did our Saviour give us His divine sermon on the mount?" But Wesley answered, "that was the *letter that killeth.*" "Hold," said his antagonist, "you seem not to know what you say: are our Lord's words the letter that killeth?"

But it would have been as easy to cure a fever by reasoning with the patient, as to have made Wesley at this time doubt the soundness of his new opinions. He had just been abridging the Life of Mr. Haliburton: "My son," says Mrs. Hutton in a letter to Samuel Wesley, "designed to print it, to show the experience of that holy man of in-dwelling, etc. Mr. Hutton and I have forbidden him to be concerned in handling such books into the world; but if your brother John or Charles think it will tend to promote God's glory, they will soon convince my son that God's glory is to be preferred to his parents' commands. It was a very great affliction to them," she said, to see their two children drawn into these wild notions by their great opinion of Mr. John's sanctity and judgment: she supposed that Mr. John was about to visit his brother at Tiverton; and if his brother could then either confine or convert him, it would be a great charity

to many other honest, well-meaning, simple souls, as well as to her children. When he knew his behaviour, he certainly would not think him 'a quite right man'; and unless some stop could be put to his extravagance in exhorting people to disregard all teaching but by such a spirit as came in dreams to some, and in visions to others, the mischief which he would do wherever he went, among ignorant but well-meaning Christians, would be very great. She described her son as good-humoured, very undesigning, and sincerely honest; but of weak judgment, and so fitted for any delusion. He had been ill of a fever, and so many of these fancied saints gathered about him, that she expected his weak brain would have been quite turned.

To this letter, which represented a real and by no means a light affliction, Samuel Wesley returned such an answer as might have been expected from a good and religious man of sound judgment.

Before this letter was written John had left England. After his new birth, he had continued about a fortnight in heaviness, because of manifold temptations,—in peace, but not in joy. A letter which he received perplexed him, because it maintained, that "no doubting could consist with the least degree of true faith; that whoever at any time felt any doubt or fear, was not weak in faith, but had no faith at all; and that none had any faith till the law of the Spirit of life had made him wholly free from the law of sin and death." Begging God to direct him, he opened his Testament, and his eye fell upon that passage where St. Paul speaks of babes in Christ, who were not able to bear strong meat, yet he says to them, "Ye are God's building, ye are the temple of God." Surely then, he reasoned,

these men had some degree of faith, though it is plain their faith was but weak. His mind, however, could not bear to be thus sawn asunder, as he calls it; and he determined to visit the Moravians at Herrnhut, in the hope that "conversing with those holy men, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are weak, would be a means of so establishing his soul, that he might go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength."

CHAPTER V.

THE MORAVIANS.—WESLEY IN GERMANY.

FEW religious communities may look back upon their history with so much satisfaction as the United Brethren. In the ninth century Christianity was introduced into Bohemia, from Greece. When Bohemia was united to the empire by Otho I., the people were brought under the yoke of Rome, and compelled to receive a liturgy which they did not understand. But many still retained the custom of their fathers; and when some of the Waldenses sought refuge from persecution in Bohemia, they found people who, if not in fellowship with them, were disposed to receive their doctrines. The ground was thus ready for the seed when Wickliffe's writings were introduced: those writings produced a more immediate effect there than they did in England; and Bohemia gave to reformed religion, in Huss the first, and in Jerome the most illustrious of its martyrs.

This struggle for reformation was made too soon; that under the Elector Palatine too late. His feeble

nttempt at maintaining the kingdom to which he was elected, ended in the loss of his hereditary dominions: his paternal palace, which for beauty of structure and situation has rarely been equalled, was destroyed, and at this day it is, perhaps, the most impressive of all modern ruins: his family became wanderers, but his grandson succeeded to the British throne, and that succession secured the civil and religious liberties of Britain. Bohemia paid dearly for this final struggle; her best blood was shed by the executioner, and her freedom was extinguished.

The persecution that followed was deliberately planned and effected. The Protestant clergy were banished, first from Prague, and what till now had been the free cities,—soon from the whole kingdom. After a short interval, the nobles of the same persuasion were subjected to the same sentence, and their estates confiscated. The common people were forbidden to follow, for the law regarded them as belonging to the soil. Among the exiled preachers was John Amos Comenius, once well known in schools by his *Janua Linguarum Reserata*, notorious in his day for accrediting the dreams of certain crazy enthusiasts, but most to be remembered for the part which he bore in the history of the Moravian Church. He, being harboured by a noble, continued to visit his congregation at Fulneck, till the nobles were banished; then taking with him a part of his flock, he emigrated through Silesia into Poland. When they reached the mountains on the confines, he looked back upon his country, which he was about to leave for ever; and falling on his knees, his companions kneeling and weeping with him, he prayed that God would not utterly remove His gospel from Bohemia, but

still reserve to Himself a seed. A hundred years afterwards that prayer was inscribed within the ball of the Bohemian church steeple at Berlin, when it was regarded as a prophecy that had been accomplished.

At a synod held at Lissa in 1632, Comenius was consecrated bishop of the dispersed Brethren from Bohemia and Moravia. During the Thirty Years' War he lived in a state of high excitement and turbulent hope, till disappointment and age brought with them more wisdom, and a more contented reliance upon Providence. He then found a melancholy consolation in recording the history and discipline of a Church, which he believed would die with him; and he dedicated his book as his last will and testament, and as a precious legacy to the Church of England, to use it according to their own pleasure, and preserve it as a deposit for the posterity of the Brethren.

Comenius comforted himself by thinking that, in consequence of the events which he had lived to witness, the gospel would pass away from Christendom to other nations, "that so, as it was long ago, our stumbling might be the enriching of the world, and our diminishing the riches of the Gentiles. The consideration," said he, "of this so much-to-be-admired eternal Providence, doth gently allay the grief which I have taken by reason of the ruin of the Church of my native country, of the government of which (so long as she kept her station) me laws are here described and set forth in view; even myself, alas! being the very last superintendent of all, tha fain, before your eyes, O Churches! to shut the door after me."

He was, however, induced, by the only other surviving bishop of the Brethren, to assist in consecrating two

successors, that the episcopal succession among them might not be broken: one of these was his son-in-law, Peter Figulus Jablonsky, who was consecrated for the Bohemian branch, *in spem contra spem*, in hope against all expectation, that that branch might be restored.

Before his banishment, Comenius had been minister of the little town of Fulneck, in the margravate of Moravia; there he was long remembered with veneration, and there, and in the surrounding villages, the doctrines which he had so sedulously inculcated were cherished in secret. The Brethren, though compelled to an outward conformity with the Romish establishment, met together privately, preserved a kind of domestic discipline, and when the rinsing of the cup, which for awhile had been allowed them, was withheld, they administered the communion among themselves: the magistrates knew these things, and sometimes interfered, and punished such infractions of the law as were complained of with fine and imprisonment; but the government had learnt wisdom and moderation from experience, and was averse from any violent persecution, relying upon length of time and worldly conveniences for producing a perfect conformity to the dominant Church. From time to time such of the Brethren as could find means of removal fled from Bohemia and Moravia into the Protestant parts of Germany, and in this way a silent but considerable emigration took place, during the latter half of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. One of these emigrants, by name Christian David, and by trade a carpenter, becoming zealous for the faith of his fathers, and the increase of true religion, endeavoured to procure a safe establishment for such of his brethren as might be desirous of following his example, and shaking the dust

of their intolerant country from their feet, to settle in a land where they might enjoy their own form of worship. By his means application was made, through two reformed clergymen, to Niklaas Ludwig, Count of Zinzendorf.

Count Zinzendorf, then in the twenty-first year of his age, was a Saxon nobleman of great ardour and eccentricity. His mind had received a strong religious bias, from early education under his grandmother, and being then placed under the care of Professor Franke, the Pietist, at Halle, that good man inoculated with enthusiasm a more fiery disposition than his own. Already when a boy he had formed religious societies; already he had bound himself by a vow to labour for the conversion of the heathen, not in his own person, but by enabling others who should be well qualified thus to devote themselves. If his relations would have allowed him, he would have entered into holy orders at this early age; and when prevented from this design, he purchased the lordship of Bertholdsdorf, in Lusatia, meaning there to pass his life in retirement. He was, however, induced by his grandmother to accept an office in the Saxon government. To this personage Christian David's application was made known: he replied, that the emigrants might come when they pleased, he would endeavour to provide for them a place where they should not be molested, and meantime would receive them at Bertholdsdorf. Accordingly ten persons from the village of Sehlen, in Moravia, set off for this asylum under Christian David's guidance. On their arrival it was thought better that they should settle in some spot by themselves than in the village, and the Count's major-domo, a man who took a religious interest in their behalf, led them to a place where it was intended they

should build. It was a piece of ground near a hill called the Hutberg, or Watch Hill, on the high road to Zittau: the site had little to recommend it; it was overgrown with brakes and brambles; it was boggy, so that waggons frequently stuck fast there: and there was a want of water. Heitz, the major-domo, had gone there twice before sunrise, to observe the rising of the vapours, and infer from thence in what part a well might be dug with most likelihood of success; and on these occasions he had prayed fervently, that the measures for the benefit of these poor fugitives might be successful, and had resolved that he would build the first house in the name of the Lord. When they came to the ground, one of the women objected to it, and asked where they were to get water in that wilderness;—they would rather have settled in the village: Christian David, however, saw what conveniences there were for building on the spot, and striking his axe into one of the trees, exclaimed, "Here hath the sparrow found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, even Thine altars, O Lord of hosts!" So they began their work without assistance, but cheerfully and full of hope.

The Count's grandmother, Lady Gersdorf, who resided near at Hennersdorf, sent them a cow, that the children might not want milk. The first tree was felled on June 17th, 1722, and on October 7th they entered their first house. "May God bless the work," —said the major-domo, in the report which he transmitted to his master,—"according to His loving kindness, and grant that your Excellency may build a city on the Watch Hill (*Hutberg*), which may not only stand under the Lord's guardianship, but where all the inhabitants may stand upon the watch of the Lord!" (*Herrn Hut.*)

In allusion also to the name of the ground, he preached at the dedication of the house upon this text from Isaiah: "I will set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem! which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give Him no rest till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." From these circumstances the settlement which was thus formed obtained the well-known name of Herrnhut, the watch of the Lord.

The new community was attacked from various quarters. A Jesuit began the war, and there were Lutheran divines who entered into it upon the same side. Count Zinzendorf was too wise to engage in controversy himself. "The world hates me," said he; "that is but natural: some of my mother's children are angry with me; this is grievous. The former is not of sufficient importance to me that I should lose my time with it, and the others are too important to me, to put them to shame by an answer." But although his own conduct was more uniformly discreet than that of any other founder of a Christian community, (it would be wronging the Moravian Brethren to designate them as a sect,) he was involved in difficulties by the indiscretion of others, and the jealousy of the government under which he lived. He was therefore ordered to sell his estates, and afterwards banished. Against the first of these mandates he had provided by conveying his estates to his wife; and though he was soon permitted to return to his own country, yet as the Brethren were only continuing in Saxony upon sufferance, it was judged advisable to enlarge themselves by establishing colonies in countries where the magistrates would not interfere

with them, and no foreign prince would interfere with their protectors. When the Count resigned his estates, he devoted himself from that time wholly to the service of the Lord, and more especially among that congregation of exiles which God had committed to his care, and which he regarded as a parish destined to him from eternity.

The Count was still a banished man from Saxony, when Wesley with his old fellow-traveller Ingham, and six other companions of the same spirit (three of whom were Germans), left England to visit the Moravian Brethren at Herrnhut; in expectation that by communion with them his faith would be established. They landed at Rotterdam and proceeded to Ysselstein; Baron de Watteville was residing here, and here Wesley found some of his English acquaintance domesticated, and passed a day with the community in religious exercises, and in "hearing from them," he says, "the wonderful work which God was beginning to work over all the earth." They travelled on foot to Cologne, went up the Rhine to Mentz, and were received at Frankfort by Peter Boehler's father. The next day they reached Marienborn, where Zinzendorf had a family of disciples, consisting of about fifty persons, gathered out of many nations. "And here," says Wesley, "I continually met with what I sought for,—living proofs of the power of faith; persons saved from inward as well as outward sin, by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts; and from all doubt and fear, by the abiding witness of the Holy Ghost given unto them."

Here he collected the opinions of the Count upon those peculiar points of doctrine in which he was most interested. Of the Count he says little: Zinzendorf

and Wesley had admired and loved each other at a distance, but their friendship was not likely to be improved by nearer intercourse. The Count stood in the double relation of Prophet and Patron to the Moravians. He was still the German Baron; and in a country where feudal pride had abated nothing of its pretensions, his rank and power unavoidably, though perhaps unwittingly, increased and confirmed his authority over a people who stood in need of his protection, and had been bred up, many of them, in vassalage, and all in conscious inferiority. Watteville, the only member of the Moravian Church who was his equal in rank, acknowledged the ascendancy of his talents, and he lived in a spiritual empire within which his discourses and writings were received as oracles, and his influence was supreme.

But the community appeared to Wesley such as his ardent imagination had prefigured them, and under this impression he wrote of them from Marienborn to his brother Samuel. "God," said he, "has given me, at length, the desire of my heart. I am with a Church whose conversation is in Heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as He walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one spirit, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. Oh! how high and holy a thing Christianity is! and how widely distant from that, I know not what, which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart, nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer. I grieve to think how that holy name by which we are called, must be blasphemed among the heathen, while they see discontented Christians, passionate Christians, resentful Christians,

earthly-minded Christians. Yea, to come to what we are apt to count small things, while they see Christians judging one another, ridiculing one another, speaking evil of one another, increasing instead of bearing one another's burdens. How bitterly would Julian have applied to these, 'See how these Christians love one another!' I know I *myself*, I doubt *you* sometimes, and my sister often, have been under this condemnation."

He had intended to rest at Marienborn only for a day or two, but he remained a fortnight. As the travellers advanced in Germany they were grievously annoyed by municipal and military examinations, which were conducted with the most phlegmatic inhospitality. These senseless interruptions provoked Wesley, who had been accustomed to English liberty in his motions, and who was impatient of nothing so much as of loss of time. They were sometimes carried about from one magistrate to another for more than two hours, before they were suffered to go to their inn. After a journey of eleven days from Marienborn they reached Herrnhut.

This place, the first and still the chief settlement of the Moravian Brethren, consisted at that time of about a hundred houses, built upon the great road from Zittau to Löbau. The Brethren had chosen to build by the roadside, because they expected to find occasion for offering instruction to travellers as they might be passing by. The visitors were lodged in the house appointed for strangers. And here Wesley found one of his friends from Georgia, and had opportunities of observing and inquiring fully into the economy of this remarkable people, who without the restriction of a vow had submitted to a rule of life, as formal as that of a monastic order, and though in some

respects less burthensome, in others not less fantastic. The sexes were divided each into five classes, the three first consisting of children according to their growth, the two others of the young, and of the married. The single men, and single women and widows dwelt in separate houses, but each in community. Two women kept a nightly watch in the women's apartment, and two men in the street. They were expected to pray for those who slept, and to sing hymns which might excite feelings of devotion in those who were awake. There was an *eldest* over each sex, and two inferior eldests, over the young men and the boys, and over the unmarried women and the girls. Besides this classification according to sex, age, and condition, each household was considered as a separate class and had its helper or deacon, its censor, its monitor, its almoner, and its servant or helper of the lowest order; in the female classes these offices were filled by women. The deacon or helper was to instruct them in their private assemblies; to take care that outward things were done decently and in order, and to see that every member grew in grace, and walked suitably to his holy calling. The censors were to observe the smallest things and report them either to the helpers or monitors, and the monitors might freely admonish even the rulers of the Church. And as if this system of continual inspection were not sufficient, there were secret monitors, besides those who were known to hold that office. They were sub-divided into bands, the members of which met together twice or thrice a week to confess their faults one to another, and pray for one another. Every band had its leader chosen as being a person of the most experience, and

all these leaders met the superior eldest every week, for the purpose of "laying open to him and to the Lord whatsoever hindered or furthered the work of God in the souls committed to their charge."

There were four pastors or teachers, as they were called, at Herrnhut, and these persons were regularly ordained. They were overseers of the whole flock, and were the only men except the eldest, and one or two of the helpers, who were allowed to converse with the women. The elders, and teachers, and helpers, held one weekly conference concerning the state of the souls under their care, another concerning the youth, and a daily one relating to the outward affairs of the Church. The censors, monitors, almoners, attendants on the sick, servants, schoolmasters, young men, and even the children, had also their weekly conferences relating to their several offices and duties, and once a week there was a conference at which any person might be present, and propose any question or doubt. Public service was performed every morning and evening at eight o'clock: it consisted of singing, and expounding the Scriptures, with a short prayer, which in the evening was usually mental; and this latter service concluded with the kiss of peace. On Sunday, in addition to the daily service, and the regular church service at Bertholdsdorf, the superior eldest gave separate exhortations to all the members of the community, who were divided for that purpose into fourteen classes, spending about a quarter of an hour with each class. After the evening eight o'clock service, the young men went round the town singing hymns. On the first Saturday in the month the sacrament was administered, and they washed each other's feet, the men and women

apart; the second was a solemn prayer day for the children; the third was set apart for a general intercession and thanksgiving; the fourth was the monthly conference of all the superiors of the Church. And a round of perpetual prayer through every hour of the day and night was kept up by married men and women, maids, bachelors, boys and girls, twenty-four of each, who volunteered to relieve each other in this endless service.

The children were prepared by their education for a life of such continual pupilage. They rose between five and six, prayed awhile in private, and worked till seven; an hour's schooling followed, and then the hour of public service. From nine till eleven they were at school, they were then indulged with an hour's walk: at twelve they dined all together, and worked till one: from one till three writing or working was the order of the day, arithmetic at three, history at four: work again at five, supper at six, and more work till seven: a little prayer at seven, and a little walking till eight, when the younger children went to bed, and the larger to public service, and when this was done they were set again to work till bedtime, which was at ten. Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and English were taught. There were no holidays or relaxation of any kind, except the little time allowed for walking.

It is somewhat remarkable, that Wesley should have said nothing of their customs respecting matrimony. He took the account which they presented to the Theological Faculty at Wittemberg, and appears not to have inquired farther. In this the Moravians say, "We highly reverence marriage, as greatly conducive to the kingdom of Christ; but neither our young men nor

women enter into it till they assuredly know they are married to Christ. When any know it is the will of God, that they should change their state, both the man and woman are placed for a time with some married persons, who instruct them how to behave, so that their married life may be pleasing to God. Then their design is laid before the whole Church, and after about fourteen days, they are solemnly joined though not otherwise habited than they are at other times. If they make any entertainment, they invite only a few intimate friends, by whose faithful admonitions they may be the better prepared to bear their cross, and fight the good fight of faith." This passage Wesley inserted in the second part of his Journal, without any comment or further explanation.

"I would gladly," he says, "have spent my life here: but my Master calling me to labour in another part of His vineyard, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place." After a fortnight's tarriance, therefore, he departed on foot as he came, and returned to England.

CHAPTER VI.

WESLEY IN LONDON.—WHITEFIELD RETURNS TO ENGLAND.—WHITEFIELD AT BRISTOL.

CHARLES WESLEY had not known his brother's intention of visiting Herrnhut till he had set out for Germany. He was not sufficiently recovered to have accompanied him, but he kept up, during his absence, the impression which had been produced, and John found, upon his return, that the Society which now met together con-

sisted of thirty-two persons. His presence, however, was required; "for though," says he, "a great door had been opened, the adversaries had laid so many stumbling blocks before it, that the weak were daily turned out of the way. Numberless misunderstandings had arisen, by means of which the way of truth was much blasphemed; and thence had sprung anger, clamour, bitterness, evil speaking, envyings, strifes, railings, evil surmises, whereby the enemy had gained such an advantage over the little flock, that of the rest durst no man join himself to them." Nor was this all,—a dispute arose concerning predestination, the most mischievous question by which human presumption has ever been led astray. This matter was laid to rest for the present, and a few weeks after his return, Wesley had eight bands of men and two of women under his spiritual direction.

He informed his German friends of the state of things in an epistle with the superscription, "To the Church of God which is in Herrnhut, John Wesley, an unworthy Presbyter of the Church of God which is in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ." The style of this epistle corresponded to the introduction. It began thus: "Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His unspeakable gift! for giving me to be an eye-witness of your faith and love, and holy conversation in Christ Jesus. I have borne testimony thereof, with all plainness of speech, in many parts of Germany, and thanks have been given to God, by many, on your behalf. We are endeavouring here also, by the grace which is given us, to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ." He wrote also to Count Zinzendorf: "May our gracious Lord, Who counteth

whatsoever is done to the least of His brethren as done to Himself, return sevenfold to you and the Countess, and to all the Brethren, the kindness you did to us. It would have been great satisfaction to me, if I could have spent more time with the Christians who love one another. But that could not be now, my Master having called me to work in another part of His vineyard. I hope," he added, "if God permit, to see them at least once more, were it only to give them the fruit of my love, the speaking freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them."

Count Zinzendorf would not have been very well pleased if he had known that one of the things which Wesley disapproved was the supremacy which he exercised over the Moravians. For Wesley, immediately upon his return, had begun a letter to the Moravian Church, in a very different strain from the epistle which he afterwards substituted for it. Instead of a grave and solemn superscription, it began with, "My dear Brethren"; and after saying that he greatly approved of their conferences and bands, their method of instructing children, and their great care of the souls committed to their charge, he proceeded to propose, "in love and meekness," doubts concerning certain parts of their conduct, which he wished them to answer plainly, and to consider well. "Do you not," he pursued, "wholly neglect joint fasting? Is not the Count all in all? Are not the rest mere shadows, calling him Rabbi; almost implicitly both believing and obeying him? Is there not something of levity in your behaviour? Are you in general serious enough? Are you zealous and watchful to redeem time? Do you not sometimes fall into trifling

conversation? Do you not magnify your own Church too much? Do you believe any who are not of it to be in gospel liberty? Are you not straitened in your love? Do you love your enemies and wicked men as yourselves? Do you not mix human wisdom with divine, joining worldly prudence with heavenly? Do you not use cunning, guile, or dissimulation in many cases? Are you not of a close, dark, reserved temper and behaviour? Is not the spirit of secrecy the spirit of your communion? Have you that childlike openness, frankness, and plainness of speech, so manifest to all in the Apostles and first Christians?"

Some of these queries savour of supererogatory righteousness, and as they contain no allusion either to the wild heretical fancies which are deducible from Count Zinzendorf's writings, nor to his execrable language, it is evident that Wesley must have been ignorant of both. He saw much to disapprove in the Moravians, but he says, that being fearful of trusting his own judgment, he determined to wait yet a little longer. Indeed he thought that whatever might be the errors of the United Brethren, the good greatly preponderated; and therein he judged of them more truly, as well as more charitably, than when he afterwards separated from them.

How he judged of himself at this time appears by the result of a curious self-examination, in which he tried himself by the test of St. Paul: "*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are past away. Behold all things are become new.*" "First," says Wesley, "his judgments are new; his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness. He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God; to

have no good thing abiding in him, but all that is corrupt and abominable: in a word, to be wholly earthly, sensual, and devilish, a motley mixture of beast and devil. Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

"Again, his judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure (so called), or indeed in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of God, and in the foretaste of those rivers of pleasure which flow at His right hand for evermore. Thus by the grace of God in Christ I judge of happiness. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

"Yet again, his judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing; to consist either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is the life of God in the soul; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart; an entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of Him that created it. Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

"Secondly, his designs are new. It is the design of his life, not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desires of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life: but to regain the image of God, to have the life of God again planted in his soul, and to be renewed after his likeness in righteousness and all true holiness. This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

"Thirdly, his desires are new, and indeed the whole train of his passions and inclinations; they are no longer fixed on earthly things; they are now set on the things of Heaven. His love and joy and hope, his sorrow and fear have all respect to things above: they all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also.—I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect, for other desires often arise in my heart: but they do not reign, I put them all under my feet through Christ Which strengtheneth me; therefore, I believe that He is creating me anew in this also, and that He has begun, though not finished His work.

"Fourthly, his conversation is new. It is *always seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers.* So is mine, by the grace of God in Christ; therefore, I am in this respect a new creature.

"Fifthly, his actions are new. The tenor of his life singly points at the glory of God; all his substance and time are devoted thereto: *whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does,* it either springs from, or leads to the love of God and man. Such, by the grace of God in Christ, is the tenor of my life; therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

"But St. Paul tells us elsewhere, that, *the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance.* Now although, by the grace of God in Christ, I find a measure of some of these in myself, viz., of peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance; yet others I find not: I cannot find in myself the love of God or of Christ; hence, my deadness and wanderings in public prayer; hence it is that even in the Holy Communion, I have rarely any more than a cold attention; hence, when I hear of the

highest instance of God's love, my heart is still senseless and unaffected; yea, at this moment I feel no more love to Him than to one I had never heard of. Again, I have not that joy in the Holy Ghost, no settled, lasting joy; nor have I such a peace as excludes the possibility either of fear or doubt. When holy men have told me I had no faith, I have often doubted whether I had or not; and those doubts have made me very uneasy, till I was relieved by prayer and the Holy Scriptures. Yet upon the whole, although I have not yet that joy in the Holy Ghost, nor that love of God shed abroad in my heart, nor the full assurance of faith, nor the (proper) witness of the Spirit with my spirit that I am a child of God, much less am I, in the full and proper sense of the words, in Christ a new creature; I nevertheless trust that I have a measure of faith, and am accepted in the Beloved: I trust the handwriting that was against me is blotted out, and that I am reconciled to God through His Son."

During his absence in Germany, Charles had prayed with some condemned criminals in Newgate, and accompanied them, with two other clergymen, to Tyburn. In consequence of this, another party of poor creatures in the same dreadful situation implored the same assistance, and the two brothers wrought them into a state of mind not less happy than that of Socrates when he drank the hemlock. "It was the most glorious instance," says Wesley, "I ever saw, of faith triumphing over sin and death." One of the sufferers was asked how he felt a few minutes only before the point of death, and he calmly answered, "I feel a peace which I could not have believed to be possible; and I know it is the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

Well might he be encouraged in his career by such proofs of his own power! Even frenzy was rebuked before him: in one of the workhouses which he visited, was a young woman raving mad, screaming and tormenting herself continually. His countenance, and manner, and voice, always impressive, and doubly so to one who had been little accustomed to looks of kindness and words of consolation, acted upon her as oil upon the waves: the moment that he began she was still, and while he encouraged her to seek relief in prayer, saying, "Jesus of Nazareth is able and willing to deliver you," the tears ran down her cheeks. "Oh! where is faith upon earth?" he exclaims, when he relates this anecdote; "why are these poor wretches left under the open bondage of Satan? Jesus, Master! give Thou medicine to heal their sickness; and deliver those who are now also vexed with unclean spirits!" Wesley always maintained that madness was frequently occasioned by demoniacal possession, and in this opinion he found many to encourage him. At this time his prayers were desired for a child who was "lunatic, and sore vexed day and night, that our Lord might be pleased to heal him, as He did those in the days of His flesh." While the apostolical character which he assumed was thus acknowledged, and every day's experience made him more conscious of his own strength, opposition of any kind served only to make him hurry on in his career, as water when it is poured into a raging conflagration, augments the violence of the fire.

Gibson was at that time Bishop of London; he was of a mild and conciliating temper; a distinguished antiquary, a sound scholar, equally frugal and beneficent, perfectly tolerant as becomes a Christian, and

conscientiously attached as becomes a bishop to the doctrines and disciples of the Church in which he held so high and conspicuous a station. The two brothers waited upon him to justify their conduct; this seems to have been a voluntary measure on their part, and the conversation which took place, as far as it has been made public, reflects more credit upon the bishop than upon them. With regard to that particular tenet which now notoriously characterised their preaching, the prelate said, "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation, and acceptable to God, I do not see how any good Christian can be without such an assurance." They made answer that they contended for this, and complained that they had been charged with Antinomianism because they preached justification by faith alone. But this was not the assurance for which they contended; they contended against it; and in the place of that calm and settled reliance upon the goodness of Almighty God, which results from reason and revelation, and is the reward of a well-spent life, they required an enthusiastic confidence as excessive as the outrageous self-condemnation by which it was to be preceded, and in which it was to have its root.

They spoke also upon the propriety of rebaptising Dissenters: Wesley said that if any persons dissatisfied with lay baptism should desire episcopal, he should think it his duty to administer it: the bishop said he was against it himself; and the interview ended with his telling them that they might have free access to him at all times. In the course of a few weeks Charles

availed himself of this permission, and informed him that a woman had desired him to baptise her, not being satisfied with her baptism by a Dissenter; she said sure and unsure were not the same. The bishop replied, that he wholly disapproved of it; and Charles Wesley made answer that he did not expect his approbation, but only came in obedience to give him notice of his intention. "It is irregular," said the bishop, "I never receive any such information, but from the minister."—"My lord, the rubric does not so much as require the minister to give you notice, but any discreet person: I have the minister's leave."—"Who gave you authority to baptise?"—"Your lordship," replied Charles, (for he had been ordained priest by him,) "and I shall exercise it in any part of the known world."—"Are you a licensed curate?" said the bishop, who began to feel justly offended at the tenor of this conversation; and Charles Wesley, who then perceived that he could no longer appeal to the letter of the law, replied he had the leave of the proper minister.—"But do you not know that no man can exercise parochial duty in London without my leave? It is only *sub silentio*."—"But you know many do take that permission for authority, and you yourself allow it."—"It is one thing to connive," said the bishop, "and another to approve; I have power to inhibit you."—"Does your lordship exact that power? Do you now inhibit me?" The answer was, "Oh! why will you push matters to an extreme?" and the bishop put an end to this irritating interview by saying, "Well, sir, you knew my judgment before, and you know it now." Charles Wesley would not reflect with much satisfaction upon this dialogue when he and his brother

altered their opinions respecting the point in dispute. They had, indeed, great reason to admire the temper and the wisdom of this excellent prelate, and of the Primate also, upon whom they waited to justify themselves, soon afterwards, without a summons. "He showed us," says Charles, "great affection, and cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our own defence, to forbear exceptionable phrases, and to keep to the doctrines of the Church. We told him we expected persecution would abide by the Church till her articles and homilies were repealed. He assured us he knew of no design in the governors of the Church to innovate; neither should there be any innovation while he lived." It was probably at this time that this "great and good man," as Wesley deservedly calls Archbishop Potter, gave him an advice for which he acknowledged, many years afterwards, that he had ever since had occasion to bless God. "If you desire to be extensively useful, do not spend your time and strength in contending for or against such things as are of a disputable nature; but in testifying against open notorious vice, and in promoting real essential holiness."

But whatever benefit Wesley might have derived from this wise counsel in his cooler years, he was in no state to profit by it when it was given. At that time he exclaimed, "God deliver me and all that seek Him in sincerity from what the world calls *Christian prudence*!" He was in the high fever of enthusiasm, and they among whom he conversed were continually administering cordials which kept the passion at its height. One of them thus describes the manner in which he was "born of God: it was an instantaneous act: my whole heart was filled with a divine power, drawing all the faculties of

my soul after Christ, which continued three or four nights and days. It was as a mighty rushing wind coming into the soul, enabling me from that moment to be more than conqueror over those corruptions which before I was always a slave to. Since that time the whole bent of my will hath been towards Him day and night, even in my dreams. I know that I dwell in Christ and Christ in me; I am bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh."

In the latter end of the year Whitefield returned from Georgia. As soon as he arrived in London, he waited on the bishop and on the Primate: they received him favourably, and no doubt were in hopes that the great object which he now had in view would fix him in Georgia, where there was no danger that his enthusiasm should take a mischievous direction. The trustees highly approved his conduct; at the request of the magistrates and settlers, they presented him with the living of Savannah, and he was ordained priest by his venerable friend the Bishop of Gloucester. "God be praised," says he: "I was praying night and day whilst on shipboard, if it might be the divine will, that good Bishop Benson, who laid hands on me as a deacon, might now make me a priest: and now my prayer is answered." There remained the business of raising money for the orphan-house, and this detained him in England long enough to take those decisive measures which, in their inevitable consequences, led step by step to the separation of the Methodists from the Church, and their organisation as a sect.

Many societies had by this time been formed in London, but the central place of meeting was a large room in Fetter Lane. Here they had their love-feasts,

at which they ate bread and water in the intervals of singing and praying, and where they encouraged each other in excesses of devotion which, if they found the mind sane, were not likely long to leave it so. "On the first night of the new year," says Wesley, "Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchins, and my brother Charles were present at our love-feast, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch, that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of His Majesty, we broke out with one voice, *We praise Thee, O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.*" "It was a Pentecost season, indeed," says Whitefield: "sometimes whole nights were spent in prayer. Often have we been filled as with new wine; and often have I seen them overwhelmed with the Divine Presence, and cry out, 'Will God indeed dwell with men upon earth? How dreadful is this place! This is no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven!'"

Meetings of this kind prolonged far into the midnight, and even through the night, were what neither the Wesleys nor Whitefield approved in their cooler age. They gave just offence to the better part of the clergy; and men who were neither deficient in piety nor in zeal, properly refused to lend their pulpits to preachers who seemed to pride themselves upon setting prudence at defiance. But if this had not driven them to field-preaching, they would have taken to that course, from a necessity of a different nature. One Sunday, when Whitefield was preaching at Bermondsey church, as he

tells us, "with great freedom in his heart, and clearness in his voice," to a crowded congregation, near a thousand people stood in the churchyard during the service, hundreds went away who could not find room, and he had a strong inclination to go out and preach to them from one of the tomb-stones. "This," he says, "put me first upon thinking of preaching without doors. I mentioned it to some friends, who looked upon it as a mad notion. However, we knelt down and prayed that nothing may be done rashly. Hear and answer, O Lord, for Thy name's sake!"

About a fortnight afterwards he went to Bristol. Near that city is a tract of country called Kingswood; formerly, as its name implies, it had been a royal chase, containing between three and four thousand acres, but it had been gradually appropriated by the several lords whose estates lay round about its borders; and their title, which for a long time was no better than what possession gave them, had been legalised. The deer had long since disappeared, and the greater part of the wood also; and coal-mines having been discovered there, from which Bristol derives its chief supply of fuel, it was now inhabited by a race of people as lawless as the foresters their forefathers, but far more brutal, and differing as much from the people of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance. They had at that time no place of worship, for Kingswood then belonged to the out-parish of St. Philip and Jacob; and if the colliers had been disposed to come from a distance of three and four miles, they would have found no room in the parish church of a populous suburb. When upon his last visit to Bristol, before his embarkation, Whitefield spoke of converting the savages, many of

his friends said to him, "What need of going abroad for this? Have we not Indians enough at home? If you have a mind to convert Indians, there are colliers enough in Kingswood."

Toward these colliers Whitefield, as he says, had long felt his bowels yearn, for they were very numerous, and yet as sheep having no shepherd. In truth, it was a matter of duty and of sound policy, (which is always duty,) that these people should not be left in a state of bestial ignorance; heathens, or worse than heathens, in the midst of a Christian country, and brutal as savages, in the close vicinity of a city which was then in extent, wealth, population, and commercial importance, the second city in England. On the afternoon, therefore, of Saturday, February 17th, 1739, he stood upon a mount, in a place called Rose Green, his "first field pulpit," and preached to as many as came to hear, attracted by the novelty of such an address. "I thought," says he, "it might be doing the service of my Creator, who had a mountain for His pulpit, and the heavens for a sounding-board; and Who, when His gospel was refused by the Jews, sent His servants into the highways and hedges." Not above two hundred persons gathered round him, for there had been no previous notice of his intention; and these perhaps being no way prepared for his exhortations, were more astonished than impressed by what they heard. But the first step was taken, and Whitefield was fully aware of its importance. "Blessed be God," he says in his journal, "that the ice is now broke, and I have now taken the field. Some may censure me; but is there not a cause? Pulpits are denied, and the poor colliers ready to perish for lack of knowledge." It was not

however, because pulpits were denied him that he had preached upon the mount at Rose Green; but in the course wherein he was proceeding, that which at first was choice, soon became necessity.

Having once taken the field, he was soon encouraged to persevere in so promising a course. All the churches being now shut, and, as he says, if open, not able to contain half that came to hear, he went again to Kingswood: his second audience consisted of some two thousand persons, his third from four to five thousand, and they went on increasing to ten, fourteen, twenty thousand. "The sun shone very bright," he says, "and the people standing in such an awful manner round the mount, in the profoundest silence, filled me with a holy admiration. Blessed be God for such a plentiful harvest. Lord, do Thou send forth more labourers into Thy harvest!" On another occasion he says, "The trees and hedges were full. All was hushed when I began: the sun shone bright, and God enabled me to preach for an hour with great power, and so loud, that all, I was told, could hear me. Blessed be God, Mr. —— spoke right; *the fire is kindled in the country!*"—"To behold such crowds standing together in such an awful silence and to hear the echo of their singing run from one end of them to the other, was very solemn and striking. How infinitely more solemn and striking will the general assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect be when they join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven!" Yet he says, "As the scene was new, and I had just begun to be an extempore preacher, it often occasioned many inward conflicts. Sometimes, when twenty thousand people were before me, I had

not, in my own apprehension, a word to say either to God or them. But I never was totally deserted; and frequently (for to deny it would be lying against God) so assisted, that I knew by happy experience what our Lord meant by saying, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.*" The deep silence of his rude auditors was the first proof that he had impressed them; and it may well be imagined how greatly the consciousness and confidence of his own powers must have been increased, when, as he says, he saw the white gutters made by the tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks,—black as they came out of their coal-pits. "The open firmament above me," says he, "the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands, some in coaches, some on horseback, and some in the trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together; to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening, was almost too much for, and quite overcame me."

While Whitefield thus with such signal success was renewing a practice which had not been seen in England since the dissolution of the monastic orders, Methodism n London had reached its highest point of extravagance, and produced upon susceptible subjects a bodily disease, peculiar and infectious; which both by those who excited and those who experienced it, was believed to be part of the process of regeneration, and, therefore, the work of God.. The first patients having no example to encourage them, naturally restrained themselves as much as they could; they fell however into convulsive motions, and could not refrain from uttering cries; and these things gave offence at first, and occasioned disputes in the Society. Charles Wesley thought them

"no sign of grace." The first violent case which occurred, was that of a middle-aged woman in the middle rank of life, who for three years had been "under strong convictions of sin, and in such a terror of mind, that she had no comfort in anything, nor any rest day or night." The minister of her parish, whom she had consulted, assured her husband that she was stark mad, and advised him to send immediately for a physician; and the physician being of the same opinion she was bled, blistered, and drenched accordingly. One evening in a meeting where Wesley was expounding to five or six hundred persons, she suddenly cried out as if in the agonies of death, and appeared to some of those about her almost to be in that state; others, however, who began to have some experience in such cases, understood that it was the crisis of her spiritual struggles. "We prayed," says Wesley in a letter to Whitefield, "that God who had brought her to the birth would give her strength to bring forth, and that He would work speedily that all might see it, and fear, and put their trust in the Lord."—"Five days she travailed and groaned being in bondage; then," he continues, "our Lord got Himself the victory," and from that time the woman was full of joy and love, and thanksgivings were rendered on her account.

Another woman was affected under more remarkable circumstances: Wesley visited her because she was "above measure enraged at the *new way*, and zealous in opposing it." He argued with her till he perceived that argument had its usual effect of inflaming more and more a mind that was already feverish. He then broke off the dispute and entreated that she would join with him in prayer, and she so far consented as

to kneel down: this was, in fact, submitting herself. "In a few minutes she fell into an extreme agony both of body and soul, and soon after cried out with the utmost earnestness, 'Now I know I am forgiven for Christ's sake!' Many other words she uttered to the same effect, witnessing a hope full of immortality. And from that hour God set her face as a flint to declare the faith which before she persecuted." This Wesley calls one of the most surprising instances of divine power that he ever remembered to have seen. The sincerity of the subject he never questioned, and perhaps there was no cause for questioning it; like Mesmer and his disciples, he had produced a new disease, and he accounted for it by a theological theory instead of a physical one. As men are intoxicated by strong drink affecting the mind through the body, so are they by strong passions influencing the body through the mind. Here there was nothing but what would naturally follow when persons, in a state of spiritual drunkenness, abandoned themselves to their sensations, and such sensations spread rapidly, both by voluntary and involuntary imitation.

Whitefield was at this time urging Wesley that he would come to Bristol without delay, and keep up the sensation which had been produced there, for he himself must prepare for his return to Georgia. These solicitations were enforced by Mr. Seward of Evesham, a young man of education and fortune, one of the most enthusiastic and attached of Whitefield's converts. It might have been thought that Wesley, to whom all places were alike, would have hastened at the call, but he and his brother, instead of taking the matter into calm and rational consideration, had consulted the Bible upon the

business, and stumbled upon uncomfortable texts. The first was, "*And some of them would have taken Him; but no man laid hands on Him*," to which they added, "not till the time was come," that its import might correspond with the subsequent lots. Another was, "*Get thee up into this mountain, and die in the Mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people.*" The next trial confirmed the impression which these had made: "*And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.*" These verses were sufficiently ominous, but worse remained behind: "*I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake*," and pushing the trial still farther, they opened upon the burial of St. Stephen the proto-martyr. "Whether," says Wesley in his Journal, "this was permitted only for the trial of our faith, God knoweth, and the event will show." These unpropitious texts rendered him by no means desirous of undertaking the journey, and when it was proposed at the society in Fetter Lane, Charles would scarcely bear it to be mentioned. Yet, like a losing gamester who the worse he finds his fortune is the more eagerly bent upon tempting it, he appealed again to the oracles of God, which were never designed thus to be consulted in the spirit of heathen superstition. "He received," says the Journal, "these words, as spoken to himself, and answered not again," "*Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, and yet shalt thou not mourn or weep, neither shall thy tears run down.*" However disposed the brothers might have been that he should have declined the journey without farther consultation, the members of the society continued to dispute upon it, till, seeing no probability of coming to an agreement by any other means, they had

recourse to sortilege; and the lot decided that Wesley should go. This being determined, they opened the Bible "concerning the issue," and the auguries were no better than before: "*When wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hands, and take you away from the earth?*" This was one; the final one was, "*Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem.*" There are not so many points of similitude between Bristol and Jerusalem, as between Monmouth and Macedon, and Henry the Fifth was more like Alexander than John Wesley would have acknowledged himself to resemble Ahaz; but it was clear language for an oracle. "We dissuaded my brother," says Charles, "from going to Bristol, from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him I desired to die with him." "Let me not be accounted superstitious," says Wesley, "if I recite the remarkable Scriptures which offered as often as we inquired touching the consequences of this removal." It will not be thought superfluous here to have repeated them.

CHAPTER VII.

WESLEY AT BRISTOL.

AT Bristol the modern practice of field-preaching had begun; and the foundations of Methodism as a substantive and organised sect, existing independently of the Church, were now to be laid at Bristol. These are

remarkable events in the history of that city, one of the most ancient, most beautiful, and most interesting in England.

Wesley had never been at Bristol before: Whitefield received him there, and introduced him to persons who were prepared to listen to him with eager and intense belief: "Help him, Lord Jesus," says Whitefield, "to water what Thy own right hand hath planted, for Thy mercy's sake!" Having thus provided so powerful a successor, he departed. Wherever he took his leave, at their places of meeting, there was loud weeping: "Oh," he exclaims, "these partings!" When he forced himself away, crowds were waiting at the door to give him a last farewell, and near twenty friends accompanied him on horseback.

His journey lay through Kingswood; and there the colliers, without his knowledge, had prepared an entertainment for him. Having been informed that they were willing to subscribe towards building a charity-school for their children, he had preached to them upon the subject, and he says it was surprising to see with what cheerfulness they parted with their money on this occasion; all seemed willing to assist, either by their money or their labour; and now at this farewell visit they earnestly entreated that he would lay the first stone. The request was somewhat premature, for it was not yet certain whether the site which they desired would be granted them; a person, however, was present who declared he would give a piece of ground in case the lord of the manor should refuse, and Whitefield then laid a stone; after which he knelt, and prayed God that the gates of hell might not prevail against their design; the colliers saving a hearty Amen.

On the day before his departure he set Wesley an example of field-preaching. "I could scarce reconcile myself," says Wesley, "at first to this strange way, having been all my life, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a church." The next day he observed that our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, was "one pretty remarkable precedent of field-preaching; and," he adds, "I suppose there were churches at that time also"; a remark which first indicates a hostile feeling towards the Establishment, for it has no other meaning. "On the morrow, at four in the afternoon," he says, "I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this (is it possible any one should be ignorant that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?) '*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*'" There is much of the language of humility here, and little of the spirit; but it was scarcely possible that any man should not have been inflated upon discovering that he possessed a power over the minds of his fellow-creatures so strong, so strange, and at that time so little understood.

The paroxysms of the disease which Methodism excited, had not appeared at Bristol under Whitefield's preaching, they became frequent after Wesley's arrival

there. One day, after Wesley had expounded the fourth chapter of Acts, the persons present, "called upon God to confirm His word." "Immediately," he adds, "one that stood by, to our no small surprise, cried out aloud, with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death; but we continued in prayer, till *a new song was put in her mouth, a thanksgiving unto our God.* Soon after two other persons (well known in this place, as labouring to live in all good conscience towards all men) were seized with strong pain, and constrained to *roar for the disquietness of their heart.* But it was not long before they likewise burst forth into praise to God their Saviour. The last who called upon God as out of the belly of hell, was a stranger in Bristol; and in a short space he also was overwhelmed with joy and love, knowing that God had healed his backslidings. So many living witnesses hath God given, that *His hand is still stretched out to heal, and that signs and wonders are even now wrought by His holy child Jesus.*" At another place, "a young man was suddenly seized with a violent trembling all over, and in a few minutes, the *sorrows of his heart being enlarged,* sunk down to the ground; but we ceased not calling upon God, till He raised him up full of *peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.*"

In later years Wesley neither expected paroxysms of this kind, nor encouraged them; nor are his followers in England forward to excite or boast of them. They maintain, however, that these early cases were the operation of grace, and attempt to prove it by the reality of the symptoms, and the permanence of the religious impressions which were produced. "Perhaps," says Wesley, "it might be because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive anything, unless we see it with

our eyes and hear it with our ears, that God in tender condescension to our weakness suffered so many outward signs at the very time when He wrought the inward change, to be continually seen and heard among us. But although they saw signs and wonders, for so I must term them, yet many would not believe." These things, however, occasioned a discussion with his brother Samuel: and Wesley perhaps remembered towards the latter end of his life, and felt the force of the arguments which had no weight with him while he was in this state of exaltation.

On his first arrival in Bristol, that part of the Methodist discipline was introduced which he had adopted from the Moravians, and male and female bands were formed, as in London, that the members might meet together weekly, to confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another. "How dare any man," says Wesley, "deny this to be, as to the substance of it, a means of grace ordained by God? unless he will affirm with Luther, in the fury of his solifidianism, that St. James's Epistle is an epistle of straw. A more important measure was the foundation of the first Methodist preaching-house; and this, like the other steps which led inevitably to a separation from the Church, was taken without any such design, or any perception of its consequences. The rooms in which the societies at Bristol had hitherto met in Nicholas Street, Baldwin Street, and the Back Lane, were small, incommodious, and not entirely safe. They determined, therefore, to build a room large enough for all the members, and for as many of their acquaintances as might be expected to attend: a piece of ground was obtained in the Horse Fair, near St. James's

Churchyard, and there, on May 12th, 1739, "the first stone was laid with the voice of praise and thanksgiving." Wesley himself had no intention of being personally engaged either in the direction or expense of the work; for the property had been settled upon eleven feoffees, and upon them he had supposed the whole responsibility would rest. But it soon appeared that the work would be at a stand if he did not take upon himself the payment of all the workmen; and he found himself presently encumbered with a debt of more than a hundred and fifty pounds, which he was to discharge how he could, for the subscription of the Bristol societies did not amount to a fourth part of the sum. In another and more important point, his friends in London, and Whitefield more especially, had been farther-sighted than himself; they represented to him that the feoffees would always have it in their power to turn him out of the room after he had built it, if he did not preach to their liking; and they declared that they would have nothing to do with the building, nor contribute anything towards it, unless he instantly discharged all feoffees, and did everything in his own name. Though Wesley had not foreseen this consequence, he immediately perceived the wisdom of his friends' advice: no man was more alive to the evils of congregational tyranny; he called together the feoffees, cancelled the writings without any opposition on their part, and took the whole trust, as well as the whole management, into his own hands. "Money," he says, "it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it; but I knew *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*; and in His name set out, nothing doubting."

After he had been about three months in Bristol, there came pressing letters from London, urging him to return thither as soon as possible, because the brethren in Fetter Lane were in great confusion, for want of his presence and advice. For a while, therefore, he took leave of his growing congregation, saying, that he had not found such love, "no, not in *England*," nor so child-like, artless, teachable a temper, as God had given to these Bristolians.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHITEFIELD IN LONDON.—FRENCH PROPHETS.—EXTRAVAGANCES OF THE METHODISTS.

DURING his abode at Bristol, Wesley had had many thoughts concerning the unusual manner of his ministering. He who had lately attempted with intolerant austerity to enforce the discipline of the Church, and revive practices which had properly been suffered to fall into disuse, had now broken through the forms of that Church, and was acting in defiance of her authority. This irregularity he justified, by a determination to allow no other rule of faith, or practice, than the Scriptures; not, perhaps, reflecting that in this position he joined issue with the wildest religious anarchists. "God in Scripture," he reasoned, "commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous; man forbids me to do this in another's parish, that is in effect, to do it at all, seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall; whom then shall I hear, God or man? *If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge*

you; a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not this gospel. But where shall I preach it upon what are called Catholic principles? Why not in any of the Christian parts of the habitable earth, for all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes?" This reasoning led him to look upon all the world as his parish. "In whatever part of it I am," he says, "I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to, and sure I am that His blessing attends it; His servant I am, and as such am employed (glory be to Him) day and night in His service; I am employed according to the plain direction of His word, *as I have opportunity of* doing good unto all men. And His providence clearly concurs with His word, which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, *and go about doing good.*"

Some of the disciples in London, meantime, had pursued their master's fundamental principle farther than he had any intention of following it. A layman, whose name was Shaw, insisted that a priesthood was an unnecessary and unscriptural institution, and that he himself had as good a right to preach, baptise, and administer the sacraments, as any other man. Such a teacher found ready believers; the propriety of lay-preaching was contended for at the Society in Fetter Lane, and Charles Wesley strenuously opposed what he called these pestilent errors. In spite of his opposition, a certain Mr. Bowers set the first example. Two or three more ardent innovators declared that they would no longer be members of the Church of England

"Now," says Charles, in his Journal, "am I clear of them; by renouncing the Church, they have discharged me." Bowers, who was not obstinate in his purpose, acknowledged that he had erred, and was reconciled to Charles Wesley: but owing to these circumstances, and to some confusion which the French prophets, as they were called, were exciting among the Methodists, it was judged expedient to summon John with all speed from Bristol.

Charles had been powerfully supported in these disputes by Whitefield and his friend Howel Harris, a young and ardent Welshman, who was the first great promoter of Methodism in his own country. The former had now taken the field here also: the Vicar of Islington had lent him his pulpit, but the Church-warden forbade him to preach there unless he could produce a licence; and Whitefield gladly interpreted this to be a manifestation of the divine pleasure, that he should preach in the churchyard, which, he says, his Master by His providence and spirit compelled him to do. "To-morrow I am to repeat that mad trick, and on Sunday to go out into Moorfields. The word of the Lord runs and is glorified; people's hearts seem quite broken; God strengthens me exceedingly: I preach till I sweat through and through."

There was great prudence in beginning the attack upon Satan upon a Sunday: it was taking him at disadvantage, the most brutal of his black-guard were not upon the ground or not engaged in their customary sports of brutality; and the preacher derived some protection from the respect which was paid to the Sabbath day: Whitefield did not venture as yet to encounter them when they were in full force. His

favourite ground upon week-days was Kennington Common, and there prodigious multitudes gathered together to hear him; he had sometimes fourscore carriages, (in those days no inconsiderable number for London to send forth on such an occasion,) very many horsemen, and from thirty to forty thousand persons on foot: and both there, and on his Sunday preachings in Moorfields, when he collected for the orphan-house, so many halfpence were given him by his poor auditors, that he was wearied in receiving them, and they were more than one man could carry home.

While he was engaged in this triumphant career Wesley arrived, and on the day after his arrival accompanied him to Blackheath, expecting to hear him preach: but when they were upon the ground, where about twelve or fourteen thousand persons were assembled, Whitefield desired him to preach in his stead. Wesley was a little surprised at this, and somewhat reluctant, for he says nature recoiled; he did not however refuse, and being greatly moved with compassion for the rich that were present, he addressed his discourse particularly to them: "Some of them seemed to attend, while others drove away with their coaches from so uncouth a preacher." Whitefield notices this circumstance in his journal with great satisfaction: "I had the pleasure," he says, "of introducing my honoured and reverend friend Mr. John Wesley to preach at Blackheath. The Lord give him ten thousand times more success than He has given me! I went to bed rejoicing that another fresh inroad was made into Satan's territories by Mr. Wesley's following me in field-preaching in London as well as in Bristol."

It deserves particular notice that no fits or convulsions

nad as yet been produced under Whitefield's preaching, though he preached the same doctrine as the Wesleys, and addressed himself with equal or greater vehemence to the passions, and with more theatrical effect. But when Wesley, on the second day after his arrival, was preaching to a society in Wapping, the symptoms reappeared with their usual violence, and were more than usually contagious.

A difference of opinion concerning these outward signs, as they are called, was one of the subjects which had distracted the London Methodists, and rendered Wesley's presence among them necessary. The French prophets also had obtained considerable influence over some of the Society ; these prophets had now for about half a century acted as frantic and as knavish a part for the disgrace of a good cause, as the enemies of that cause could have desired.

Those who had taken up their abode in England formed a sect here, and as soon as the Methodists began to attract notice, naturally sought to make converts among a people whom they supposed to be prepared for them. The first of these extravagants with whom Charles Wesley was acquainted, was an English proselyte, residing at Wickham, to whom he was introduced on his way to Oxford, and with whom it seems he was not only to take up his lodging, but to sleep. This gentleman insisted that the French prophets were equal, if not superior, to the prophets of the Old Testament. Charles, however, was not aware that his host and chum was himself a gifted personage, till they retired to bed, when as they were undressing, he fell into violent agitations, and gobbled like a turkey-cock. "I was frightened," he says, "and

began exorcising him with 'Thou deaf and dumb devil!' He soon recovered from his fit of inspiration. I prayed, and went to bed, not half liking my bed-fellow, nor did I sleep very sound with Satan so near me."

These people raised warm debates among the Methodists; so that Charles, during his brother's absence, found it prudent to break off a disputation, by exclaiming, "Who is on God's side? Who for the old prophets rather than the new? Let them follow me!" and immediately he led the way into the preaching room. They had been chiefly successful among the women; when Wesley arrived in London, therefore, he warned the female disciples *not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they were of God:* and during the short time of his stay he said, "It pleased God to remove many misunderstandings and offences, that had crept in among them, and to restore in good measure the spirit of love and of a sound mind."

But on his return to Bristol, the French prophets had been there also, and he says it is scarce credible what an advantage Satan had gained, during his absence of only eight days. *Woe unto the prophets, saith the Lord, who prophesy in My name, and I have not sent them!* Who were the teachers against whom this denunciation is levelled, he endeavoured to point out, and exhorted his followers, "to avoid as fire all who do not speak according to the law and the testimony." He told them, "they were not to judge of the spirit whereby any one spake, either by appearances, by common report, or by their own inward feelings. No, nor by any dreams, visions, or revelations, supposed to be made to their souls, any more than by

their tears, or any involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies." He warned them, "that all these were in themselves of a doubtful disputable nature; they might be from God, and they might not: and therefore they were not simply to be relied on, (any more than simply to be condemned,) but to be tried by a farther rule, to be brought to the only certain test, the law and the testimony." While he was speaking, one of his hearers dropped down, and in the course of half an hour, seven others in violent agonies, "*the pains as of hell*," he says, "*came about them*"; but, notwithstanding his own reasoning, neither he nor his auditors called in question the divine origin of these emotions, and they went away rejoicing and praising God. Whenever he now preached the same effects were produced; some of the people were always "cut to the heart"; they were "seized with strong pangs," they "terribly felt the wrath of God abiding on them," they were "constrained to roar aloud, while the sword of the spirit was *dividing asunder their souls, and spirits, and joints, and marrow*."

The Bishop of Bristol, after a conversation in which Wesley had confirmed to him the fact that people were thrown into fits at his meetings, and that he prayed over them and his prayer was often heard, desired him to quit his diocese, where he was not commissioned to preach, and consequently had no business. Wesley replied, "My business on earth is to do what good I can: wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay so long as I think so; at present I think I can do most good here, therefore here I stay: being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate

commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England. I do not, therefore, conceive that in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask 'shall I obey God or man?' But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile, that I could advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls in any other place more than in Bristol, in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do."

Yet while he thus set at nought the authority of the Bishop, he would have revived a practice which had fallen into disuse throughout all the reformed Churches, as being little congenial to the spirit of the Reformation. The Society at Bristol passed a resolution that all the members should obey the Church to which they belonged, by observing all Fridays in the year as days of fasting or abstinence; and they agreed that as many as had opportunity should meet on that day and spend an hour together in prayer. This probably gave currency, if it did not occasion, a report which now prevailed that he was a Papist, if not a Jesuit. This report, he affirms, was begun by persons who were either bigoted Dissenters, or Clergymen; and they spoke either in gross ignorance, not understanding what the principles of Popery were, or in wilful falsehood, thinking to serve their own cause.

Charles Wesley, who was now pursuing the course of itinerant preaching which Whitefield had begun, joined his brother at Bristol about this time; and it so happens that the manner of his preaching and the method which was observed in their meetings, are described by one whom curiosity and a religious temper

led to hear him in a field near the city. "I found him," says this person, "standing on a table board in an erect posture, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven in prayer: he prayed with uncommon fervour, fluency, and variety of proper expressions. He then preached about an hour in such a manner as I scarce ever heard any man preach: though I have heard many a finer sermon, according to the common taste, or acceptation of sermons, I never heard any man discover such evident signs of a vehement desire, or labour so earnestly to convince his hearers that they were all by nature in a sinful, lost, undone state. He showed how great a change a faith in Christ would produce in the whole man, and that every man who is in Christ, that is, who believes in Him unto salvation, is a new creature. Nor did he fail to press how ineffectual their faith would be to justify them unless it wrought by love. purified their hearts, and was productive of good works. With uncommon fervour he acquitted himself as an ambassador of Christ, beseeching them in His name, and praying them in His stead to be reconciled to God. And although he used no notes nor had anything in his hands but a Bible, yet he delivered his thoughts in a rich, copious variety of expression, and with so much propriety, that I could not observe anything incoherent or inanimate through the whole performance."

This person, whose name was Joseph Williams, was a dissenter of Kidderminster; and having been accustomed to a dry and formal manner of preaching, he was the more impressed by the eloquence of one whose mind was enriched by cultivation as well as heated with devotion.

This good man would not have thus spoken with unqualified approbation, had he been present at any more violent exhibition. But the "outward signs" about this time were for a while suspended; the more susceptible subjects had gone through the disease, and the symptoms which it assumed in others were such as would awaken horror in the beholders rather than excite in them any desire of going through the same invitation. "Many," says Wesley, "were deeply convinced, but none were delivered from that painful conviction. *The children came to the birth, but there was not strength to bring forth.* I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous God by questioning His work, and that, therefore, He is withdrawn from us for a season." He now returned to London, and preached triumphantly at Whitefield's favourite stations—Moorfields and Kennington Common. How deeply Samuel Wesley disapproved the course of proceeding in which his brothers had engaged, appears in one of the last letters which he lived to write: it was addressed to his mother. "I was applied to," he says, "for an account of my father's life and writings for Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses. The person applying is an old clergyman, named Tomkins, at Kilmington, near Axminster. He wants to know where and when my father was born, where, when, and by whom admitted into holy orders. He wants my two brothers' histories also; and as their actions have been important enough to be committed to writing, they are the fittest people to send information about themselves. They are now become so notorious, the world will be anxious to know when and where they were born, what schools bred at, what colleges of in Oxford, and when

matriculated, what degrees they took, and when, where, and by whom ordained; what books they have written or published. I wish they may spare so much time as to vouchsafe a little of their story. For my own part, I had much rather have been picking straws within the walls, than preaching in the area of Moorfields."

This area, however, was to John Wesley a theatre where he cheerfully exposed himself to the "blasts of the people," never failing to produce upon some the effect he desired. But his greatest triumph was in finding that his mother at length acquiesced in the whole of his proceedings. She told him that till lately she had scarce heard of a present forgiveness of sins, or of God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit; much less had she imagined that it was the common privilege of all true believers, and therefore she had never dared ask it for herself. But recently when her son-in-law Hall, in delivering the cup to her, pronounced these words, *the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee*, the words struck through her heart, and she then knew that for Christ's sake God had forgiven her all her sins. Wesley asked whether his father had not the same faith, and whether he had not preached it to others. She replied, he had it himself, and declared, a little before his death, he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt of his salvation; but that she did not remember to have heard him preach upon it explicitly; and therefore supposed that he regarded it as the peculiar blessing of a few, not as promised to all the people of God.

This was a great affliction to her son Samuel. He wrote to her, "It was with exceeding concern and grief I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion, so

far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too? I earnestly beseech the Almighty to preserve you from joining a schism at the close of your life, as you unfortunately engaged in one at the beginning of it. They boast of you already as a disciple. Charles has told John Bentham that I do not differ much, if we understand one another. I am afraid I must be forced to advertise, such is their apprehension, or their charity. But they design separation. Things will take their natural course, without an especial interposition of Providence. They are already forbid all the pulpits in London, and to preach in that diocese is actual schism. In all likelihood it will come to the same all over England, if the Bishops have courage enough. They leave off the liturgy in the fields: though Mr. Whitefield expresses his value for it, he never once read it to his tatterdemalions on a common. Their societies are sufficient to dissolve all other societies but their own: will any man of common sense or spirit suffer any domestic to be in a bond engaged to relate everything without reserve to five or ten people, that concerns the person's conscience, how much soever it may concern the family? Ought any married persons to be there, unless husband and wife be there together? This is literally putting asunder whom God hath joined together. As I told Jack, I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him, discipline is at too low an ebb; but that he should excommunicate the Church. It is pretty near it. Holiness and good works are not so much as *conditions* of our acceptance with God. Love-feasts are introduced, and extemporary prayers and expositions of Scripture, which last are enough to bring in all

confusion: nor is it likely they will want any miracles to support them. He only can stop them from being a formed sect, in a very little time, Who *ruleth the madness of the people.* Ecclesiastical censures have lost their terrors, thank fanaticism on the one hand and atheism on the other. To talk of persecution therefore from thence is mere insult. Poor Brown who gave name and rise to the first separatists, though he repented every vein of his heart, could never undo the mischief he had done."

Samuel Wesley died within three weeks after the date of this letter; and John says in his Journal, "We could not but rejoice at hearing from one who had attended my brother in all his weakness, that several days before he went hence, God had given him a calm and full assurance of his interest in Christ. Oh! may every one who opposes it be thus convinced that this doctrine is of God!" Wesley cannot be suspected of intentional deceit: yet who is there who upon reading this passage would suppose that Samuel had died after an illness of four hours?—well might he protest against the apprehension or the charity of those who were so eager to hold him up to the world as their convert. The state of mind which this good man enjoyed had nothing in common with the extravagant doctrine of assurance which his brothers were preaching with such vehemence during the ebullition of their enthusiasm; it was the sure and certain hope of a sincere and humble Christian who trusted in the merits of his Saviour and the mercy of his God. He died as he had lived, in that essential faith which has been common to all Christians in all ages;—that faith wherein he had been trained up, which had been rooted in him by a sound education,

and confirmed by diligent study, and by his own ripe judgment. And to that faith Wesley himself imperceptibly returned as time and experience taught him to correct his aberrations. In his old age he said to Mr. Melville Horne these memorable words: "When fifty years ago my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, told the good people of England, that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven, they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel, Melville, they did not stone us! The Methodists, I hope, know better now: we preach assurance as we always did, as a common privilege of the children of God; but we do not enforce it, under the pain of damnation, denounced on all who enjoy it not."

CHAPTER IX.

WESLEY'S VIEWS.—STATE OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND.

WESLEY had now proposed to himself a clear and determinate object. What had from time to time been effected in the monastic families of the Romish establishment, when the laws of those institutions were relaxed and the spirit had evaporated, he wished to do upon a wider theatre and with a nobler purpose. He hoped to give a new impulse to the Church of England, to awaken its dormant zeal, infuse life into a body where nothing but life was wanting, and lead the way to the performance of duties which the State had blindly overlooked, and the Church had scandalously neglected: thus would he become the author of a second Reformation, whereby all that had been left undone in the former would be completed.

Three measures then were required for completing the Reformation in England: that the condition of the inferior clergy should be improved; that the number of religious instructors should be greatly increased; and that a system of parochial education should be established and vigilantly upheld. These measures could only be effected by the legislature. A fourth thing was needful—that the clergy should be awakened to an active discharge of their duty; and this was not within the power of legislation. The former objects never for a moment occupied Wesley's consideration. He began life with ascetic habits and opinions; with a restless spirit, and a fiery heart. Ease and comfort were neither congenial to his disposition nor his principles: wealth was not necessary for his calling, and it was beneath his thoughts: he could command not merely respectability without it, but importance. Nor was he long before he discovered what St. Francis and his followers and imitators had demonstrated long before, that they who profess poverty for conscience sake, and trust for daily bread to the religious sympathy which they excite, will find it as surely as Elijah in the wilderness, and without a miracle. As little did the subject of national education engage his mind: his aim was direct, immediate, palpable utility. Nor could he have effected any thing upon either of these great legislative points: the most urgent representations, the most convincing arguments, would have been disregarded in that age, for the time was not come. The great struggle between the destructive and conservative principles—between good and evil—had not yet commenced; and it was not then foreseen that the very foundations of civil

society would be shaken, because governments had neglected their most awful and most important duty. But the present consequences of this neglect were obvious and glaring; the rudeness of the peasantry, the brutality of the town populace, the prevalence of drunkenness, the growth of impiety, the general deadness to religion. These might be combated by individual exertions, and Wesley felt in himself the power and the will both in such plenitude, that they appeared to him a manifestation, not to be doubted, of the will of Heaven. Every trial tended to confirm him in this persuasion; and the effects which he produced, both upon body and mind, appeared equally to himself and to his followers miraculous. Diseases were arrested or subdued by the faith which he inspired, madness was appeased, and, in the sound and sane, paroxysms were excited which were new to pathology, and which he believed to be supernatural interpositions, vouchsafed in furtherance of his efforts by the Spirit of God, or worked in opposition to them by the exasperated Principal of Evil. Drunkards were reclaimed; sinners were converted; the penitent who came in despair was sent away with the full assurance of joy; the dead sleep of indifference was broken; and oftentimes his eloquence reached the hard brute heart, and, opening it, like the rock of Horeb, made way for the living spring of piety which had been pent within. These effects he saw,—they were public and undeniable; and looking forward in exultant faith, he hoped that the leaven would not cease to work till it had leavened the whole mass; that the impulse which he had given would surely, though slowly, operate a national reformation, and bring about,

in fulness of time, the fulfilment of those prophecies which promise us that the kingdom of our Father shall come, and His will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

With all this there was intermingled a large portion of enthusiasm, and no small one of superstition; much that was erroneous, much that was mischievous, much that was dangerous. But had he been less enthusiastic, of a humbler spirit, or a quieter heart, or a maturer judgment, he would never have commenced his undertaking. Sensible only of the good which he was producing, and which he saw produced, he went on courageously and indefatigably in his career. Whither it was to lead he knew not, nor what form and consistence the societies which he was collecting would assume; nor where he was to find labourers as he enlarged the field of his operations; nor how the scheme was to derive its temporal support. But these considerations neither troubled him, nor made him for a moment foreslack his course. God, he believed, had appointed it, and God would always provide means for accomplishing his own ends.

CHAPTER X.

WESLEY SEPARATES FROM THE MORAVIANS.

But the house which Wesley had raised was divided in itself. He and the Moravians had not clearly understood each other when they coalesced. Count Zinzendorf, moreover, looked upon the society which had been formed in London, as a colony belonging to his spiritual empire; and if he was incapable of bearing with an equal, Wesley could as little brook a superior.

After the breach had been formally announced, Count Zinzendorf published an advertisement, declaring that he and his people had no connection with John and Charles Wesley. The Moravians forebore from all controversy upon the subject, but Wesley did not continue the tone of charity and candour in which he had addressed them upon the separation. Speaking of a short narrative which Zinzendorf had written of his own life, he says, "Was there ever such a Proteus under the sun as this Lord Fraydeck, Domine de Thurstain, etc., etc., for he has almost as many names as he has faces or shapes. Oh, when will he learn (with all his learning) simplicity and godly sincerity? When will he be an upright follower of the Lamb, so that no guile may be found in his mouth?" He still for a while professed that he loved the Moravians; but he gave such reasons for not continuing to admire them as he had formerly done, that it was manifest the love also was on the wane, and would soon be succeeded by open enmity. He censured them for calling themselves the Brethren, and condemned them with asperity for arrogating to themselves the title of the Moravian Church, which he called a palpable cheat. He blamed them for conforming to the world by useless trifling conversation; for levity in their general behaviour; for joining in diversions in order to do good, and for not reproving sin, even when it was gross and open. He said that much cunning might be observed in them, much evasion and disguise: that they treated their opponents with a settled disdain, which was neither consistent with love nor humility: that they confined their beneficence to the narrow bounds of their own society. Their preaching, he

said, destroyed the love of God and the love of our neighbour. "If a man," said he, "was before a zealous member of our Church, groaning for the prosperity of our Zion, it is past; all that zeal is at an end: he regards the Church of England no more than the Church of Rome: his tears no longer fall, his prayers no longer ascend, that God may shine upon her desolation. The friends that were once as his own soul, are now no more to him than other men. All the bands of that formerly endeared affection are as threads of tow that have touched fire. Even the ties of filial tenderness are dissolved. The child regards not his own parent: he no longer regards the womb that bare, nor the paps that gave him suck. Recent instances are not wanting. I will particularise, if required. Yea, the son leaves his aged father, the daughter her mother, in want of the necessaries of life. I know the persons. I have myself relieved them more than once: for that was *corban whereby they should have been profited.*"—He should have asked himself whether Methodism did not sometimes produce the same effects. The fifth commandment is but a weak obstacle in the way of enthusiasm.

Wesley soon went farther than this, and, throwing aside all appearance of any remaining attachment to the Moravians, charged them with being cruel and deceitful men. He published in his Journals accusations against them of the foulest kind, made by persons who had forsaken their society; thus giving the whole weight of his judgment to their abominable charges. And he affirmed that it was clear to a demonstration, that the Moravian elders assumed a more absolute authority over the conscience than the Pope himself:

that to gain and secure this, they used a continued train of guile, fraud, and falsehood of every kind; and that they scraped their votaries to the bone as to their worldly substance. Yet, he added, they were still so infatuated as to believe that theirs was the only true Church upon earth. They could not possibly have believed so, if they had been guilty of the crimes with which they were charged; and that Wesley should have repeated and thereby sanctioned those charges, must be considered as the most disingenuous act of his life. For, however much he differed from the Moravians, and however exceptionable he might have deemed their doctrine, he well knew that there was nothing in that doctrine which could lead either to such practices, or be pleaded in palliation of them: and had he been called upon to give evidence concerning them in a court of justice, his testimony must have been wholly in their favour.

Whitefield also entered the lists against them. They had committed some fooleries; and, like the religious communities of the Romish Church, it appears that if a believer were disposed to give or bequeath money to the brotherhood, they were not scrupulous concerning the injury which he might do to himself or his family. The heavier charges have been effectually disproved by time.

CHAPTER XI.

WESLEY SEPARATES FROM WHITEFIELD.

In separating from Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians, there had been little sacrifice of feeling on Wesley's part; but he was involved at the same time in a

difference with Whitefield, which affected him deeply, and led to consequences of greater importance.

"At the commencement of his career, Wesley was of a pugnacious spirit, the effect of his sincerity, his ardour, and his confidence. He wished to obtain Whitefield's acquiescence in his favourite doctrine of perfection, the "free, full, and present salvation from all the guilt, all the power, and all the in-being of sin"; a doctrine as untenable as it was acceptable to weak minds and inflated imaginations. He knew also that Whitefield held the Calvinistic tenets of election and irreversible decrees; tenets which, if true, would make God unjust, and the whole gospel a mere mockery. Upon both these subjects he wrote to his old friend and disciple, who at this time, though he could yield to him upon neither, wished earnestly to avoid all dispute. "My honoured friend and brother," said he in his reply, "for once hearken to a child who is willing to wash your feet. I beseech you, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, if you would have my love confirmed towards you, write no more to me about misrepresentations wherein we differ. To the best of my knowledge, at present no sin has dominion over me, yet I feel the strugglings of indwelling sin day by day. The doctrine of election, and the final perseverance of those who are in Christ, I am ten thousand times more convinced of, if possible, than when I saw you last. You think otherwise. Why, then, should we dispute, when there is no probability of convincing? Will it not, in the end, destroy brotherly love, and insensibly take from us that cordial union and sweetness of soul, which I pray God may always subsist between us? How glad would the enemies of the Lord be to see us divided! How many

would rejoice, should I join and make a party against you! And, in one word, how would the cause of our common Master every way suffer, by our raising disputes about particular points of doctrine! Honoured Sir, let us offer salvation freely to all by the blood of Jesus; and whatever light God has communicated to us, let us freely communicate to others. I have lately read the life of Luther, and think it in no wise to his honour, that the last part of his life was so much taken up in disputing with Zwinglius and others, who in all probability equally loved the Lord Jesus, though they might differ from him in other points. Let this, dear Sir, be a caution to us; I hope it will to me; for, by the blessing of God, provoke me to it as much as you please, I do not think ever to enter the lists of controversy with you on the points wherein we differ. Only I pray to God, that the more you judge me, the more I may love you, and learn to desire no one's approbation, but that of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ."

These feelings are creditable to Whitefield, but he was not consistent in pursuing the course of conduct which he thus advised. Two months only after this letter was written, he followed it with another, in a different strain. "Honoured Sir," it began, "I cannot entertain prejudices against your conduct and principles any longer without informing you. The more I examine the writings of the most experienced men, and the experiences of the most established Christians, the more I differ from your notion about not committing sin, and your denying the doctrines of election and the final perseverance of the saints. I dread coming to England, unless you are resolved to oppose these truths with less warmth than when I was there last. I dread your

coming over to America; because the work of God is carried on here, and that in a most glorious manner, by doctrines quite opposite to those you hold. God direct me what to do! Sometimes I think it best to stay here, where we all think and speak the same thing: the work goes on without divisions, and with more success, because all employed in it are of one mind. I write not this, honoured Sir, from heat of spirit, but out of love. At present I think you are entirely inconsistent with yourself; and therefore do not blame me if I do not approve of all that you say. God himself, I find, teaches my friends the doctrine of election. Sister H. hath lately been convinced of it; and, if I mistake not, dear and honoured Mr. Wesley hereafter will be convinced also. Perhaps I may never see you again till we meet in judgment; then, if not before, you will know, that sovereign, distinguishing, irresistible grace brought you to Heaven." Wesley received this letter in a kindly spirit, and thanked him for it. "The case is quite plain," he said in reply. "There are bigots both for predestination and against it. God is sending a message to those on either side, but neither will receive it unless from one who is of their own opinion. Therefore, for a time you are suffered to be of one opinion, and I of another. But when His time is come, God will do what men cannot, namely, make us both of one mind." Soon afterwards Whitefield writes to one of his friends in England, "For Christ's sake desire dear brother Wesley to avoid disputing with me. I think I had rather die than see a division between us; and yet how can we walk together, if we oppose each other?" And again to Wesley himself, he says: "For Christ's sake, if possible, dear Sir, never speak against election in your

sermons: no one can say that I ever mentioned it in public discourses, whatever my private sentiments may be. For Christ's sake, let us not be divided amongst ourselves: nothing will so much prevent a division as your being silent on that head."

While Whitefield from America was thus exhorting to forbearance from controversy, the Calvinistic Methodists in England were forcing on the separation which he deprecated while he foresaw. One of the leading members in London, by name Acourt, had disturbed the Society by introducing his disputed tenets, till Charles Wesley gave orders that he should no longer be admitted. John was present when next he presented himself and demanded whether they refused admitting a person only because he differed from them in opinion. Wesley answered no, but asked what opinion he meant. He replied, "That of election. I hold that a certain number are elected from eternity, and these must and shall be saved, and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned." And he affirmed that many of the Society held the same; upon which Wesley observed that he never asked whether they did or not; "only let them not trouble others by disputing about it." Acourt replied, "Nay, but I will dispute about it." "Why, then," said Wesley, "would you come among us, who you know are of another mind?" "Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right." "I fear," said Wesley, "your coming with this view would neither profit you nor us." "Then," rejoined Acourt, "I will go and tell all the world that you and your brother are false prophets. And I tell you in one fortnight you will all be in confusion."

Some time before, Wesley had received a letter, in

which he was reproached for not preaching the gospel, because he did not preach the doctrine of election. According to his usual presumptuous practice at that time, instead of consulting with his friends, or even advising with himself upon the prudence of engaging in controversy, he drew a lot for his direction, and the lot was "preach and print." So he preached a sermon against this deplorable doctrine, and printed it. Whitefield was then in England, and at his desire the publication was for a while suppressed; but it was sent into the world soon after his departure for America.

Whitefield indeed was frequently indulging, sometimes in such exaggerated expressions of humility, and at others in such ebullitions of spiritual pride, that it is no wonder the suspicion of hypocrisy should have attached to him, till time and death had placed his sincerity beyond all dispute. "I have now," he says, "such large incomes from above, and such precious communications from our dear Lord Jesus, that my body sometimes can scarcely sustain them." At other times he "abhors" himself "in dust and ashes." He is "a worm, and no man." He "deserves to be the outcast of the people."—"Why do so many of my Lord's servants take notice of such a dead dog as I am?" Then, again, he would pamper his imagination with the hopes of persecution and martyrdom.

"Suffer we must, I believe, and that great things Our Lord by His providence begins to show it. Ere long perhaps we may sing in a prison, and have our feet set fast in the stocks. But faith in Jesus turns a prison into a palace, and makes a bed of flames become a bed of down."

At this time Whitefield was on the way from America.

While upon the passage he wrote to Charles Wesley, expostulating with him and his brother, in strong, but affectionate terms. "My dear, dear brethren," said he, "why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination? Why did you in particular, my dear brother Charles, affix your hymn, and join in putting out your late hymn-book? How can you say you will not dispute with me about election, and yet print such hymns, and your brother send his sermon against election over to America? Do not you think, my dear brethren, I must be as much concerned for truth, or what I think truth, as you? God is my judge; I always was, and hope I always shall be, desirous that you may be preferred before me. But I must preach the gospel of Christ, and that I cannot *now* do without speaking of election." But although, when he was thus addressing the Wesleys, the feelings of old friendship returned upon him; his other letters, written during the voyage, evince that he looked on to a separation as the certain consequence of this difference in opinion. "Great perils," he says, "await me; but Jesus Christ will send His angel, and roll away every stone of difficulty." "My Lord's command now, I believe, is, 'Take the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.' Help me by your prayers; it is an ease thus to unbosom myself to a friend. I have sought the Lord by prayer and fasting, and He assures me that He will be with me: whom then should I fear? 'The Lord is girding me for the battle, and strengthening me mightily in the inner man.'"

In this state of mind he reached London. Charles Wesley was there, and their meeting was affectionate. "It would have melted any heart," says Whitefield,

"to have heard us weeping after prayer that, if possible, the breach might be prevented." Old feelings of respect and love revived with such strength in his heart, that he promised never to preach against the Wesleys, whatever his private opinion might be. But many things combined to sour him at this time. He had written against Archbishop Tillotson's works, and the Whole Duty of Man, a book in those days of unrivalled popularity, in a manner which he himself then acknowledged to be intemperate and injudicious; and this had offended persons who were otherwise favourably disposed towards him. His celebrity also seemed to have passed away; the twenty thousands who used to assemble at his preaching had dwindled down to two or three hundred; and in one exhibition at Kennington Common, the former scene of his triumphs, scarcely a hundred were gathered together to hear him. Worldly anxieties, too, were fretting him, and those of a kind which made the loss of his celebrity a serious evil. The Orphan House in Georgia was to be maintained: he had now nearly a hundred persons in that establishment, who were to be supported by his exertions: there were not the slightest funds provided, and Georgia was the dearest part of the British dominions. He was above a thousand pounds in debt upon that score, and he himself not worth twenty. Seward, the wealthiest and most attached of his disciples, was dead, and had made no provision for him, nor for the payment of a bill for 350*l.* on the Orphan House account, which he had drawn, and for which Whitefield was now responsible, and threatened with an arrest. If his celebrity were gone, the Bank of Faith, upon which he had hitherto drawn with such confidence and such success, would be closed against

him. He called it truly a trying time: "Many, very many of my spiritual children," says he, "who, at my last departure from England, would have plucked out their own eyes to have given me, are so prejudiced by the dear Messrs. Wesleys dressing up the doctrine of election in such horrible colours, that they will neither hear, see, nor give me the least assistance; yea, some of them send threatening letters that God will speedily destroy me." This folly on the part of Wesley's hot adherents irritated him, and that irritation was fomented by his own. He began naturally to regard his former friends as heretics and enemies; and when Wesley, who had been summoned by his brother Charles to London on this occasion, went to him, to see if the breach might yet be closed, Whitefield honestly told him, that they preached two different gospels, and therefore he not only would not join with him, or give him the right hand of fellowship, but would publicly preach against him wheresoever he preached at all. He was reminded of the promise which he had but a few days before made, that, whatever his opinion might be, he would not do this: but he replied, that promise was only an effect of human weakness, and he was now of another mind.

CHAPTER XII.

METHODISM SYSTEMATISED.—FUNDS.—CLASSES.—ITINERANCY.—LAY PREACHING.

WESLEY had at this time some cause for apprehending a disunion which would have grieved him far more than his breach with Whitefield. His brother Charles, who had assisted him so cordially in opposing the errors of

Molther, was inclined to side with the Moravians, after those errors had been disowned; and he proceeded so far as to declare, that it was his intention not to preach any more at the Foundry.

Charles, however, soon yielded to the opinions of a brother whom he so entirely respected and loved. A breach between them indeed would have afforded a malignant pleasure to their enemies, which would in no slight degree have aggravated the pain arising from such a disunion; and they had too long been linked together for good and for evil, for honour and dishonour, to be separated by any light difference.

Schism, according to Wesley, has almost always been wrongly defined a separation *from* a church, instead of a separation *in* a church. Upon his own definition, he himself was more peculiarly guilty of the offence; and however much he contended against those of his followers who were for separating from the Establishment, it is scarcely possible that he should not have foreseen the separation to which all his measures tended. Those measures were taken in good faith, and with good intent; most of them indeed arising, unavoidably, from the circumstances in which he found himself; but this was their direct, obvious, inevitable tendency. One step drew on another. Because he preached an enthusiastic and dangerous doctrine, which threw his hearers into convulsions, he was properly, by most clergymen, refused the use of their pulpits. This drove him to field-preaching; but field-preaching is not for all weathers, in a climate like ours. Prayer-meetings also were a part of his plan: and thus it became expedient to build meeting-houses. Meeting-houses required funds: they required ministers too, while he was itinerating. Few

clergymen could be found to co-operate with him; and though at first he abhorred the thought of admitting uneducated laymen to the ministry, lay preachers were soon forced upon him, by their own zeal, which was too strong to be restrained, and by the plain necessity of the case.

The organisation of Methodism, which, at this time, may vie with that of any society that has ever been instituted, for the admirable adaptation of the means to the end proposed, was slowly developed, and assisted in its progress by accidental circumstances. When the meeting-house was built at Bristol, Wesley had made himself responsible for the expenses of the building: subscriptions and public collections had been made at the time, but they fell short. As the building, however, was for their public use, the Methodists at Bristol properly regarded the debt as public also: and Wesley was consulting with them concerning measures for discharging it, when one of the members proposed that every person in the society should contribute a penny a week, till the whole was paid. It was observed, that many of them were poor, and could not afford it. "Then," said the proposer, "put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give anything, well. I will call on them weekly; and if they can give nothing, I will give for them, as well as for myself. And each of you call upon eleven of your neighbours weekly, receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." The contribution of class-money thus began, and the same accident led to a perfect system of inspection. In the course of their weekly calls, the persons who had undertaken for a class, as these divisions were called, discovered some irregularities among those for whose contributions

they were responsible, and reported it to Wesley. Immediately he saw the whole advantage that might be derived from such an arrangement. This was the very thing which he had long wanted to effect. He called together the leaders, and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those under his care. A few weeks afterwards, as soon as Wesley arrived in London, he called together some of his leading disciples, and explained to them the great difficulty under which he had hitherto laboured, of properly knowing the people who desired to be under his care. They agreed that there could be no better way to come at a sure and thorough knowledge of every individual, than by dividing them into classes, under the direction of those who could be trusted, as had been done at Bristol. Thenceforth, whenever a society of Methodists was formed, this arrangement was followed: a scheme for which Wesley says he could never sufficiently praise God, its unspeakable usefulness having ever since been more and more manifest.

The business of the leaders was to see every person in their classes at least once a week, in order to inquire how their souls prospered; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion might require; and to receive what they were willing to give toward the expenses of the Society and the relief of the poor. They were also to meet the minister and the stewards of the Society, that they might inform the minister of any that were sick, and of any that were disorderly, and would not be reproved, and pay to the stewards what they had collected from their several classes in the week preceding. At first they visited each person at his own house; but this was soon found, on many accounts, to be inex-

pedient, and even impracticable. It required more time than the leaders could spare; many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, who would not suffer them to be thus visited; and when this frequent and natural objection did not exist, it often happened that no opportunity could be had of speaking to them, except in the presence of persons who did not belong to the Society, so that the purpose of the visit was rendered useless. Differences also, and misunderstandings, between members of the same class could not be cleared up, unless the parties were brought face to face. For these reasons it was soon determined that every class should assemble weekly. Advice or reproof was then given, as need required; quarrels were made up, misunderstandings were removed; and after an hour or two had thus been passed, the meeting concluded with prayer and singing. "It can scarcely be conceived," says Wesley, "what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship, of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other. As they had daily a more intimate acquaintance with, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. Evil men were detected and reproved: they were borne with for a season; if they forsook their sins, we received them gladly; if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the Society."

Accident had led to this essential part of the Methodist discipline. The practice of itinerancy also was taken

up, not from forethought, but as the natural consequence of the course in which the Wesleys found themselves engaged. Whitefield, on his first return from America, earnestly advised Charles Wesley to accept a college living, thinking that the best service which he could perform would be thus to get possession of a pulpit; and his brother and all the first leaders of the Methodists urged him after this to settle at Oxford. But soon, before they were aware of it, they were engaged in a course of itinerancy. This was no new practice in England. But when the Methodists began their career, the practice had been discontinued for more than seventy years, and therefore it had all the effect of novelty when it was revived. It existed, indeed, among the Quakers; but the desire of making proselytes had ceased in that Society: they had by that time acquired that quiet and orderly character by which they have long been distinguished, and the movements of their preachers were rarely or never observed out of their own circle.

By becoming an itinerant, Wesley acquired general notoriety, which gratified his ambition, and by exciting curiosity concerning him, induced persons to hear him who would not have been brought within the influence of his zeal by any other motive. This alone would have filled the churches, if he had been permitted to preach in them. Field-preaching was a greater novelty: it attracted greater multitudes, and brought him more immediately among the lower and ruder classes of society, whom he might otherwise in vain have wished to address. The utility of the practice, while so many persons lived in habitual disregard of all religious ordinances, and while so large a part of the people were suffered to grow up in brutal ignorance, could not indeed

be questioned by any reasonable man. Its irregularity he confessed, but he protested that those persons who compelled him to be thus irregular, had no right to censure the irregularity.

Wesley had the less repugnance to commence preaching in the open air in England, because it was what he had often done in Georgia, and did not therefore at first appear so strange to himself as to his congregation. But neither he nor his brother at that time perceived that it must soon become a necessary part of their plan to admit the co-operation of laymen. Their first co adjutors were all clergymen: except Whitefield, none of them had devoted themselves body and soul to the work; they had not entered upon it with the same passion or the same ambition; their habits, their feelings, or their circumstances, would have rendered an itinerant life impossible or intolerable; they were settled upon cures, or staked down by family duties, or disqualified for incessant fatigue and public exhibitions by their state of health and constitutional diffidence. But among the lay-converts there were many who were not troubled with this last disqualification,—young men in the heat and vigour of youth, free to choose their course, and with the world before them. And the doctrine which Wesley preached was above all others able to excite confidence while it kindled enthusiasm. His proselytes by the act of conversion were regenerate men; they were in a state of Christian perfection; they had attained the grace of our Lord—the fellowship of the Holy Spirit; they had received the seal and stamp of God. So he taught and they believed; and men who believed this required no other qualification to set up as teachers themselves than a good stock of animal spirits, and a ready flow of

words, the talent which of all others has the least connection with sound intellect.

The fitness of this innovation naturally excited much discussion in the Society, and the Wesleys strongly opposed it; but a sort of compromise seems to have been made, for the laymen were permitted to expound the Scriptures, which, as Law justly observed to Charles, was the very worst thing both for themselves and others.

Wesley had raised a spirit which he could not suppress, but it was possible to give it a useful direction. He has been said at first to have entertained a hope, that the ministers of those parishes in which he had laboured with success, would watch over those whom he had "turned from the error of their ways." But in the very commencement of his career, Methodism was decidedly and properly discouraged by the ecclesiastical authorities, because of the enthusiastic doctrines which were preached, and the extravagances which were encouraged. That hope, therefore, could not long have been maintained; and Wesley soon found that if his converts were left to themselves, they speedily relapsed into their former habits. When he returned to these places, great part of his work was to begin again, and with greater difficulty, for the second impression was neither so strong, nor so readily made, as the first. "What," says he, "was to be done in a case of so extreme necessity, where so many souls lay at stake? No clergyman would assist at all. The expedient that remained was to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God, and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or

by prayer, or by exhortation." In this capacity he had appointed Cennick to reside at Kingswood, and left Maxfield in charge of the Society in London. Both these persons were men of great natural powers; and though ultimately both separated from him, they did honour to his discernment, and never disgraced his choice.

From expounding to preaching was an easy step. The official biographers say that the young man Maxfield, "being fervent in spirit, and mighty in the Scriptures, greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him; and by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go farther than he had at first designed. He began to *preach*; and the Lord so blessed the word, that many were not only deeply awakened and brought to repentance, but were also made happy in a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture marks of true conversion, inward peace, and power to walk in all holiness, evinced the work to be of God." But however successful his preaching, it was represented to Wesley as an irregularity, which it required his presence to put a stop to, and he hastened to London for that purpose. His mother lived at that time in his house adjoining the Foundry, and she perceiving marks of displeasure in his countenance when he arrived, inquired the cause. He replied, "Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher, I find." Mrs. Wesley looked at him seriously, and said, "John, you know what my sentiments have been; you cannot suspect me of favouring readily anything of this kind; but take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching,

and hear him also yourself." Wesley, like Loyola, was always ready to correct any part of his conduct, or system, as soon as he discovered that it was inconvenient or erroneous. He was too wise a man to be obstinate, and too sincere in all his actions to feel any reluctance at acknowledging that he had been mistaken. He heard Maxfield preach, and expressed at once his satisfaction and his sanction, by saying, *It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.* He saw that it was impossible to prevent his followers from preaching, and with admirable readiness resolved to lead the stream which it was beyond his power to turn. From that time, therefore, he admitted volunteers whom he thought qualified to serve him, as "sons in the gospel"; but always upon the condition that they should labour where he appointed, because otherwise they would have stood in each other's way.

If this determination had not been occasioned by Maxfield's conduct, it would have been brought about by the service of another labourer, who in like manner anticipated the system about the same time. This person was a Yorkshire mason, by name John Nelson, one of those men who found in Methodism their proper sphere of action. He grew up under a pious father, who read the Scriptures in his family, and died with a settled reliance upon the mercy of God, and in full trust that Providence would provide for his widow and children. He married early and happily; his labour amply supported him, and he and his wife lived, he says, "in a good way, as the world calls it; that is, in peace and plenty, and love to each other." But his first religious impressions had been of a frightful character: he formed resolutions which he was unable to keep; uneasiness of

mind produced a restless desire of changing place; wherever he was he felt the same disquietude; and though he had experienced neither sorrow nor misfortune of any kind, being in all respects fortunate beyond most men of his condition, still he thought that rather than live thirty years more like the thirty which he had passed he would choose to be strangled. The fear of judgment made him wish that he never had been born, and yet there was a living hope in his soul. "Surely," said he, "God never made man to be such a riddle to himself, and to leave him so! There must be something in religion that I am unacquainted with, to satisfy the empty mind of man, or he is in a worse state than the beasts that perish." Under such feelings he wandered up and down the fields after his day's work was done, thinking what he should do to be saved, and he went from church to church, but found no ease; for what he heard exasperated the distemper of his mind, instead of allaying it. When he heard a clergyman expatiate upon the comfort which good men derive in death from the retrospect of a well-spent life, it led him to reflect that he had never spent a single day wherein he had not left undone something which he ought to have done, and done something which he ought not to have done.

He went to hear dissenters of divers denominations, but to no purpose. He tried the Roman Catholics, but was soon surfeited with their way of worship, which of all ways was the least likely to satisfy a spirit like his. He attended the Quakers' meeting with no better success. For names he cared nothing, nor for what he might be called upon to suffer, so that he might find peace for his soul. "I had now," he says, "tried all but the Jews, and I thought it was to no purpose to go to them"; so

he determined to keep to the Church, and read and pray, whether he perished or not. While Nelson was in this state he seldom slept four hours in the night,—sometimes he started from his sleep as if he were falling into a horrible pit; sometimes dreamed that he was fighting with Satan, and awoke exhausted and bathed in sweat from the imaginary conflict.

Thus he continued, till Wesley preached for the first time in Moorfields. "Oh!" says he, "that was a blessed morning for my soul! As soon as he got upon the stand, he stroked back his hair and turned his face towards where I stood, and I thought he fixed his eyes on me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock; and when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me." Nelson might well think thus, for it was a peculiar characteristic of Wesley in his discourses, that in winding up his sermons,—in pointing his exhortations and driving them home,—he spoke as if he were addressing himself to an individual, so that every one to whom the condition which he described was applicable, felt as if he were singled out; and the preacher's words were then like the eyes of a portrait which seem to look at every beholder. "Who," said the preacher, "Who art thou, that now seest and feelest both thine inward and outward ungodliness? Thou art the man! I want thee for my Lord, I challenge *thee* for a child of God by faith. The Lord hath need of *thee*. Thou who feelest thou art just fit for hell, art just fit to advance His glory,—the glory of His free grace, justifying the ungodly and him that worketh not. O come quickly! Believe in the Lord Jesus: and *thou*, even *thou*, art reconciled to God."

And when the sermon was ended, he said within himself, "This man can tell the secrets of my heart. He hath not left me there, for he hath showed the remedy, even the blood of Jesus." He did not, however, at once make his case known to the preacher, and solicit his particular attention: during all his inward conflicts, there was in his outward actions a coolness and steadiness of conduct, which is the proper virtue of an Englishman.

He now began to exhort his neighbours, as well as reprove them; and by defending his doctrines, when they were disputed, was led unawares to quote texts of Scripture, expound, and enforce them, in a manner which at length differed from preaching only in the name. This he did in his own house at first, where he had the good fortune to convert most of his relations; and when his auditors became so numerous that the house could not hold them, he then stood at the door and harangued there. Ingham was settled in this neighbourhood with a Moravian society; and he, at Peter Boehler's desire, gave John Nelson leave to exhort them: this permission was withdrawn, when the ill-temper which the division in London had excited, extended itself here also; and Ingham would then have silenced him, but John said he had not begun by the order of man, and would not leave off by it. Hitherto Nelson had not ventured upon preaching, for preaching it was now become, without strong inward conflicts of reluctance, arising from the natural sobriety of his character, and perhaps from a diffidence of himself. He says he would rather have been hanged on a tree than go to preach: and once, when a great congregation was gathered together begging him to preach, he acted the part of Jonah, and fled into the fields. But oppositior

stimulated him now: he "desired to die rather than live to see the children devoured by these boars out of the German wood." "God," he says, "opened His word more and more"; in other words, zeal and indignation made him eloquent. He now wrote to Mr. Wesley, telling him what he was doing, and requesting him, "as his father in the gospel, to write and give him some instructions how to proceed in the work which God had begun by such an unpolished tool as himself." Wesley replied that he would see him in the ensuing week. He came accordingly to Birstall, and found there a preacher and a large congregation raised up without his interference. Had he been still doubtful whether the admission of lay preachers should make a part of his plan, this must have decided him: "Therefore," in the words of his official biographers, "he now fully acquiesced in the order of God, and rejoiced that the thoughts of God were not as his confused thoughts."

This was Wesley's first expedition to the north of England. He proceeded to Newcastle, being induced to try that scene of action, because of the success which he had found among the colliers in Kingswood. Upon entering the town at evening, and on foot, the profligacy of the populace surprised as well as shocked him. At seven on a Sunday morning he walked with his companion to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and there he began to sing the Hundredth Psalm. This soon brought a crowd about him, which continued to increase till he had done preaching. When he had finished, the people still stood staring at him with the most profound astonishment. Upon which he said, "If you desire to know who I am,

my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again." At that hour the hill upon which he intended to preach was covered from top to bottom. "I never," he says, "saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields or at Kennington Common. I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear, and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, *I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely.* After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness." Wesley could not then remain with them; but his brother soon came and organised them; and in a few months he returned, and began to build a room for what he called the wild, staring, loving society.

There was some difficulty in obtaining a place at Newcastle whereon to build his meeting-house. "We can get no ground," he says, "for love or money. I like this well. It is a good sign. If the Devil can hinder us he shall." The purchase at length was made, and the foundation was laid of a meeting- and orphan-house, upon a scale, for the completion of which it was computed that 700*l.* would be required. He had now meeting-houses in Bristol, London, Kingswood, and Newcastle, and societies were being rapidly formed in other places by means of itinerancy, which was now become a regular system, and by the co-operation of lay preachers, who sprung up daily among his followers. At this time he judged it expedient to draw up a set of general rules, and this was done with the advice and assistance of his brother. The United

Society, as they now denominated it, was defined to be "no other than a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." The class rules were then laid down, as a means for more easily discerning whether the members were indeed thus employed. The only condition previously required of those who applied for admission, was "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and be saved from their sins." But it was expected that all who continued in the Society should "continue to evidence their desire for salvation; first, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind, especially that which is most generally practised; such as, taking the name of God in vain; profaning the Sabbath, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling; drunkenness; buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity; fighting, quarrelling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; using many words in buying or selling; buying or selling uncustomed goods; giving or taking things on usury; uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers; doing to others as we would not they should do unto us; and doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as, the putting on of gold, or costly apparel; the taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus; the singing those songs, or reading those books, that do not tend to the knowledge or love of God; softness and needless self-indulgence; laying up treasure on earth; borrowing without a probability of paying, or taking up

goods without a probability of paying for them. These were the inhibitions which the members of the Society were expected to observe.

They were expected to evidence their desire of salvation, "secondly, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they had opportunity; doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible, to all men; to their bodies, of the ability that God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison; to their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all they had any intercourse with, trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it; by doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only; by all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel might not be blamed; by running with patience the race that was set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily*; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ,—to be as the filth and offscouring of the world, and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.* They were expected also to attend on all the ordinances of God; such as, public worship, the ministry of the word, either read or expounded; the Lord's supper; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures; and fasting or abstinence." "These," said the two brothers, "are the general rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in His written word, the only rule, and the

sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know His Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways: we will bear with him for a season. But then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls."

CHAPTER XIII.

DEATH OF MRS. WESLEY.

METHODISM had now taken root in the land. Meeting-houses had been erected in various parts of the kingdom, and settled upon Wesley, the acknowledged head and sole director of the Society which he had raised and organised. Funds were provided by a financial regulation, so well devised, that the revenues would increase in exact proportion to the increase of its members. Assistant preachers were ready, in any number that might be required, whose zeal and activity compensated, in no slight degree, for their want of learning; and whose inferiority of rank and education disposed them to look up to Mr. Wesley with deference as well as respect, and fitted them for the privations which they were to endure, and the company with which they were to associate. A system of minute inspection had been established, which was at once so contrived as to gratify every individual, by giving him a sense of his own importance, and to give the preacher the most perfect knowledge of those who were under his charge. No

confession of faith was required from any person who desired to become a member: in this Wesley displayed that consummate prudence which distinguished him whenever he was not led astray by some darling opinion. The door was thus left open to the orthodox of all descriptions, Churchmen or Dissenters, Baptists or Pædobaptists, Presbyterians or Independents, Calvinists or Arminians; no profession, no sacrifice of any kind, was exacted. The person who joined the new Society was not expected to separate himself from the community to which he previously belonged. He was only called upon to renounce his vices, and follies which are near akin to them.

To this stage Methodism had advanced when Wesley lost his mother, in a good old age, ready and willing to depart. Arriving in London from one of his circuits, he found her "on the borders of eternity; but she had no doubt or fear, nor any desire but, as soon as God should call, to depart and to be with Christ." On the third day after his arrival, he perceived that her change was near. "I sate down," he says, "on the bed-side. She was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward while we commended her soul to God. From three to four the silver cord was loosing, and the wheel breaking at the cistern; and then, without any struggle, or sigh, or groan, the soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech: 'Children, as soon as I am released sing a psalm of praise to God.'" He performed the funeral service himself.

Mrs. Wesley had had her share of sorrow. During

her husband's life she had struggled with narrow circumstances, and at his death she was left dependent upon her children. Of nineteen children she had wept over the early graves of far the greater number: she had survived her son Samuel, and she had the keener anguish of seeing two of her daughters unhappy, and perhaps of foreseeing the unhappiness of the third; an unhappiness the more to be deplored, because it was not altogether undeserved.

CHAPTER XIV.

OUTCRY AGAINST METHODISM.—VIOLENCE OF MOBS AND MISCONDUCT OF MAGISTRATES.

METHODISM had now assumed some form and consistence. Meeting-houses had been built, societies formed and disciplined, funds raised, rules enacted, lay preachers admitted, and a regular system of itinerancy begun. Its furious symptoms had subsided, the affection had reached a calmer stage of its course, and there were no longer any of those outrageous exhibitions which excited scandal and compassion, as well as astonishment. But Wesley continued, with his constitutional fervour, to preach the doctrines of instantaneous regeneration, assurance, and sinless perfection. These doctrines gave just offence, and became still more offensive when they were promulgated by unlettered men, with all the vehemence and self-sufficiency of fancied inspiration. Wesley himself added to the offence by the loftiness of his pretensions. In the preface to his Third Journal, he says, "It is not the work

of man which hath lately appeared; all who calmly observe it must say, 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' The manner wherein God hath wrought is as strange as the work itself. These extraordinary circumstances seem to have been designed by God for the farther manifestation of His work, to cause His power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world." He related cures wrought by his faith and his prayers, which he considered and represented as positively miraculous. So too, when his own teeth ached, he prayed, and the pain left him. And this faith was so strong, that it sufficed sometimes to cure not only himself, but his horse also. "My horse," he says, "was so exceedingly lame, that I was afraid I must have lain by. We could not discern what it was that was amiss, and yet he would scarce set his foot to the ground. By riding thus seven miles I was thoroughly tired, and my head ached more than it had done for some months. What I here aver is the naked fact: let every man account for it as he sees good. I then thought, 'Cannot God heal either man or beast, by any means, or without any?' Immediately my weariness and headache ceased, and my horse's lameness in the same instant. Nor did he halt any more, either that day or the next. A very odd accident this also."

Even those persons who might have judged favourably of Wesley's intentions, could not but consider representations like these as discreditable to his judgment. But those who were less charitable impeached his veracity, and loudly accused him of hypocrisy and imposture. The strangest suspicions and calumnies were circulated; and men will believe any calumnies,

however preposterously absurd, against those of whom they are disposed to think ill. It was commonly reported that he was a Papist, if not a Jesuit; that he kept Popish priests in his house;—nay, it was beyond dispute that he received large remittances from Spain, in order to make a party among the poor, and when the Spaniards landed, he was to join them with 20,000 men. Sometimes it was reported that he was in prison upon a charge of high treason: and there were people who confidently affirmed that they had seen him with the Pretender in France. Reports to this effect were so prevalent, that when, in the beginning of the year 1744, a proclamation was issued requiring all Papists to leave London, he thought it prudent to remain a week there, that he might cut off all occasion of reproach; and this did not prevent the Surrey magistrates from summoning him, and making him take the oath of allegiance, and sign the declaration against Popery. Wesley was indifferent to all other accusations; but the charge of disaffection, in such times, might have drawn on serious inconveniences; and he drew up a loyal address to the King, in the name of "The Societies in derision called Methodists." The address, however, was not presented, probably because of an objection which Charles started, of its seeming to allow that they were a body distinct from the National Church, whereas they were only a sound part of that Church. Charles himself was more seriously incommoded by the imputation of disloyalty than his brother. When he was itinerating in Yorkshire, an accusation was laid against him of having spoken treasonable words, and witnesses were summoned before the magistrates at Wakefield to depose against him. Fortunately for him, he learnt this in time to present

himself, and confront the witnesses. He had prayed that the Lord would call home His banished ones; and this the accusers construed, in good faith, to mean the Pretender. The words would have had that meaning from the mouth of a Jacobite. But Charles Wesley, with perfect sincerity, disclaimed any such intention. "I had no thoughts," he said, "of praying for the Pretender, but for those who confess themselves strangers and pilgrims upon earth,—who seek a country, knowing this is not their home. You, Sir," he added, addressing himself to a clergyman upon the bench: "you, Sir, know, that the Scriptures speak of us as captive exiles, who are absent from the Lord while present in the body. We are not at home till we are in Heaven." The magistrates were men of sense: they perceived that he explained himself clearly—that his declarations were frank and unequivocal, and they declared themselves perfectly satisfied.

Yet these aspersions tended to aggravate the increasing obloquy under which the Wesleys and their followers were now labouring. "Every Sunday," says Charles, "damnation is denounced against all who hear us; for we are Papists, Jesuits, seducers, and bringers-in of the Pretender. The clergy murmur aloud at the number of communicants, and threaten to repel them." He was himself repelled at Bristol, with circumstances of indecent violence. "Wives and children," he says, "are beaten and turned out of doors and the prosecutors are the complainers: it is always the lamb that troubles the water!" A maid-servant was turned away by her master, "because," he said, "he would have none in his house who had received the Holy Ghost!" She had been thrown into the convulsions of Methodism and

continued in them fourteen hours. This happened at Bath, where, as Charles expresses himself, "Satan took it ill to be attacked in his head quarters." John had a curious interview there with Beau Nash, for it was in his reign. While he was preaching, this remarkable personage entered the room, came close to the preacher, and demanded of him by what authority he was acting. Wesley made answer, "By that of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by the present Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid his hands upon me and said, 'Take thou authority to preach the gospel.'"—Nash then affirmed that he was acting contrary to the laws. "Besides," said he, "your preaching frightens people out of their wits."—"Sir," replied Wesley, "did you ever hear me preach?"—"No," said the Master of the Ceremonies.—"How then can you judge of what you never heard?"—Nash made answer, "By common report."—"Sir," said Wesley, "is not your name Nash? I dare not judge of you by common report: I think it not enough to judge by." However accurate common report might have been, and however rightly Nash might have judged of the extravagance of Methodism, he was delivering opinions in the wrong place; and when he desired to know what the people came there for, one of the congregation cried out, "Let an old woman answer him:—You, Mr. Nash, take care of your body, we take care of our souls, and for the food of our souls we come here." He found himself a very different person in the meeting-house from what he was in the Pump-room or the assembly, and thought it best to withdraw.

But Wesley had soon to encounter more dangerous opposition. Bristol was the first place where he re-

ceived any serious disturbance from the rabble. After several nights of prelusive uproar, the mob assembled in great strength. "Not only the courts and the alleys," he says, "but all the street, upwards and downwards, was filled with people, shouting, cursing, and swearing, and ready to swallow the ground with fierceness and rage. They set the orders of the magistrates at nought, and grossly abused the chief constable, till a party of peace officers arrived and took the ringleaders into custody. When they were brought up before the mayor, Mr. Combe, they began to excuse themselves by reviling Wesley; but the mayor properly cut them short by saying, 'What Mr. Wesley is, is nothing to you. I will keep the peace. I will have no rioting in this city.'" And such was the effect of this timely and determined interposition of the civil power, that the Methodists were never again disturbed by the rabble at Bristol. In London also the same ready protection was afforded. The chairman of the Middlesex justices, hearing of the disposition which the mob had shown, called upon Mr. Wesley, and telling him that such things were not to be suffered, added, "Sir, I and the other Middlesex magistrates have orders from above to do you justice whenever you apply to us." This assistance he applied for when the mob stoned him and his followers in the streets, and attempted to unroof the Foundry.

These disturbances were soon suppressed in the metropolis and its vicinity, where the magistrates knew their duty, and were ready to perform it: but in some parts of the country, the very persons whose office it was to preserve the peace, instigated their neighbours and dependants to break it. Wesley had preached at Wednesbury in Staffordshire, both in the town-hall and

in the open air, without molestation. The colliers in the neighbourhood had listened to him peaceably; and between three and four hundred persons formed themselves into a society as Methodists. Mr. Egginton, the minister of that town, was at first well pleased with this; but offence was given him by some great indiscretion, and from that time he began to oppose the Methodists by the most outrageous means. Some of the neighbouring magistrates were ignorant enough of their duty, both as magistrates and as men, to assist him in stirring up the rabble, and to refuse to act in behalf of the Methodists, when their persons and property were attacked.

It was only at Wednesbury that advantage was taken of the popular cry against the Methodists to break open their doors and plunder their houses; but greater personal barbarities were exercised in other places. Some of the preachers received serious injury; others were held under water till they were nearly dead; and of the women who attended them, some were so treated by the cowardly and brutal populace, that they never thoroughly recovered. In some places they daubed the preacher all over with paint. In others they pelted the people in the meetings with egg-shells, which they had filled with blood and stopped with pitch. The progress of Methodism was rather furthered than impeded by this kind of persecution, for it rendered the Methodists objects of curiosity and compassion; and in every instance the preachers displayed that fearlessness which enthusiasm inspires, and which, when the madness of the moment was over, made even their enemies respect them.

The wholesome prosecution of a few rioters, in different

places, put an end to enormities which would never have been committed if the local magistrates had attempted to prevent them. The offenders were not rigorously pursued; they generally submitted before the trial, and it sufficed to make them understand that the peace might not be broken with impunity. "Such a mercy is it," says Wesley, "to execute the penalty of the law on those who will not regard its precepts! So many inconveniences to the innocent does it prevent, and so much sin in the guilty."

CHAPTER XV.

SCENES OF ITINERANCY.

WHEN Wesley began his course of itinerancy, there were no turnpikes in England, and no stage-coach which went farther north than York. In many parts of the northern counties neither coach nor chaise had ever been seen. He travelled on horseback, always with one of his preachers in company; and, that no time might be lost, he generally read as he rode. Some of his journeys were exceedingly dangerous,—through the fens of his native country, when the waters were out, and over the fells of Northumberland, when they were covered with snow. Speaking of one, the worst of such expeditions, which had lasted two days in tremendous weather, he says, "Many a rough journey have I had before, but one like this I never had, between wind, and hail, and rain, and ice, and snow, and driving sleet, and piercing cold. But it is past. Those days will return no more, and are therefore as though they had never been.

Pain, disappointment, sickness, strife,
Whate'er molests or troubles life,
However grievous in its stay
It shakes the tenement of clay,—
When past, as nothing we esteem,
And pain, like pleasure, is a dream."

It was only at the beginning of his career that he had to complain of inhospitality and indifference. As he became notorious to the world, and known among his own people, it was then considered a blessing and an honour to receive so distinguished a guest and so delightful a companion; a man who, in rank and acquirements, was superior to those by whom he was generally entertained; whose manners were almost irresistibly winning, and whose cheerfulness was like perpetual sunshine. He had established for himself a dominion in the hearts of his followers,—in that sphere he moved as in a kingdom of his own; and, wherever he went, received the homage of gratitude, implicit confidence, and reverential affection.

It was said by an old preacher, that they who would go to Heaven must do four sorts of services; *hard* service, *costly* service, *derided* service, and *forlorn* service. Hard service Wesley performed all his life, with a willing heart; so willing a one, that no service could appear costly to him. He can hardly be said to have been tried with derision, because, before he became the subject of satire and contumely, he had attained a reputation and notoriety which enabled him to disregard them. These very attacks, indeed, proved only that he was a conspicuous mark, and stood upon high ground. Neither was he ever called upon forlorn service: perhaps, if he had, his ardour might have failed him. Marks of

impatience sometimes appear when he speaks of careless hearers.

But it was seldom that he preached to indifferent auditors, and still more seldom that any withdrew from him with marks of contempt. In general, he was heard with deep attention, for his believers listened with devout reverence; and they who were not persuaded listened, nevertheless, from curiosity, and behaved respectfully from the influence of example. "I wonder at those," says he, "who talk of the *indecency* of field-preaching. The highest *indecency* is in St. Paul's church, where a considerable part of the congregation are asleep, or talking, or looking about, not minding a word the preacher says. On the other hand, there is the highest *decency* in a churchyard or field, where the whole congregation behave and look as if they saw the Judge of all, and heard Him speaking from Heaven." Sometimes when he had finished the discourse, and pronounced the blessing, not a person offered to move:—the charm was upon them still; and every man, woman, and child remained where they were, till he set the example of leaving the ground. One day many of his hearers were seated upon a long wall, built, as is common in the northern counties, of loose stones. In the middle of the sermon it fell with them. "I never saw, heard, nor read of such a thing before," he says. "The whole wall, and the persons sitting upon it, sunk down together, none of them screaming out, and very few altering their posture, and not one was hurt at all; but they appeared sitting at the bottom, just as they sate at the top. Nor was there any interruption either of my speaking or of the attention of the hearers."

The situations in which he preached sometimes

contributed to the impression; and he himself perceived, that natural influences operated upon the multitude. Sometimes, in a hot and cloudless summer day, he and his congregation were under cover of the sycamores, which afford so deep a shade to some of the old farm-houses in Westmoreland and Cumberland. In such a scene, near Brough, he observes, that a bird perched on one of the trees, and sung without intermission from the beginning of the service till the end. No instrumental concert would have accorded with the place and feeling of the hour so well. Sometimes, when his discourse was not concluded till twilight, he saw that the calmness of the evening agreed with the seriousness of the people, and that "they seemed to drink in the word of God, as a thirsty land the refreshing showers." One of his preaching places in Cornwall was in what had once been the courtyard of a rich and honourable man. But he and all his family were in the dust, and his memory had almost perished. "At Gwenap, in the same county," he says, "I stood on the wall, in the calm still evening, with the setting sun behind me, and almost an innumerable multitude before, behind, and on either hand. Many likewise sate on the little hills, at some distance from the bulk of the congregation. But they could all hear distinctly while I read, '*The disciple is not above his Master*,' and the rest of those comfortable words which are day by day fulfilled in our ears." This amphitheatre was one of his favourite stations. He says of it in his old age, "I think this is one of the most magnificent spectacles which is to be seen on this side heaven. And no music is to be heard upon earth comparable to the sound of many thousand voices, when they are all harmoniously joined together, singing praises to God and

the Lamb." At St. Ives, when a high wind prevented him standing where he had intended, he found a little enclosure near, one end of which was native rock, rising ten or twelve feet perpendicular, from which the ground fell with an easy descent. "A jetting out of the rock, about four feet from the ground, gave me a very convenient pulpit. Here well-nigh the whole town, high and low, rich and poor, assembled together. Nor was there a word to be heard, nor a smile seen, from one end of the congregation to the other. It was just the same the three following evenings. Indeed I was afraid, on Saturday, that the roaring of the sea, raised by the north wind, would have prevented their hearing. But God gave me so clear and strong a voice, that I believe scarce one word was lost." On the next day the storm had ceased, and the clear sky, the setting sun, and the smooth still ocean, all agreed with the state of the audience.

This course of life led him into a lower sphere of society than that wherein he would otherwise have moved; and he thought himself a gainer by the change. Writing to some Earl, who took a lively interest in the revival of religion which, through the impulse given, directly or indirectly, by Methodism, was taking place, he says, "To speak rough truth, I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. I mean, for my own sake. They do me no good, and, I fear, I can do none to them."

But though Wesley preferred the middling and lower classes of society to the rich, the class which he liked least were the farmers.

Wesley was likely to judge thus unfavourably of the agricultural part of the people, because they were the

least susceptible of Methodism. For Methodism could be kept alive only by associations and frequent meetings; and it is difficult, or impossible, to arrange these among a scattered population. Where converts were made, and the discipline could not be introduced among them, and the effect kept up by constant preaching and inspection, they soon fell off.

CHAPTER XVI.

WESLEY'S LAY-COADJUTORS.

WHEN Wesley had once admitted the assistance of lay-preachers, volunteers in abundance offered their zealous services. If he had been disposed to be nice in the selection, it was not in his power. He had called up a spirit which he could not lay, but he was still able to control and direct it. Men were flattered by being admitted to preach with his sanction, and sent to itinerate where he was pleased to appoint, who, if he had not chosen to admit their co-operation, would not have been withheld from exercising the power which they felt in themselves, and indulging the strong desire, which they imputed to the impulse of the Spirit: but had they taken this course, it would have been destructive to the scheme which was now fairly developed before him.

Wesley had taken no step in his whole progress so reluctantly as this. The measure was forced upon him by circumstances. It had become inevitable, in the position wherein he had placed himself: still he was too judicious a man, too well acquainted with history and with human nature, not to feel a proper repugnance to the irregularity which he sanctioned, and to apprehend

But when the disciple was of a thoughtful and inquiring mind, then Wesley's care was to direct his studies, well knowing how important it was that he should retain the whole and exclusive direction.

No founder of a monastic order ever more entirely possessed the respect, as well as the love and the admiration of his disciples; nor better understood their individual characters, and how to deal with each according to the measure of his capacity. Where strength of mind and steadiness were united with warmth of heart, he made the preacher his counsellor as well as his friend: when only simple zeal was to be found, he used it for his instrument as long as it lasted. An itinerant, who was troubled with doubts respecting his call, wrote to him in a fit of low spirits, requesting that he would send a preacher to supersede him in his circuit, because he believed he was out of his place. Wesley replied in one short sentence, "Dear brother, you are indeed *out of your place*; for you are *reasoning*, when you ought to be *praying*." And this was all. Thus tempering his authority, sometimes with playfulness, and always with kindness, he obtained from his early followers an unhesitating, a cheerful, and a devoted obedience.

[Chapters XVII. and XVIII., which are omitted, contain biographical sketches of some of Wesley's early coadjutors, viz., John Oliver, John Pawson, Alexander Mather, Thomas Olivers, John Haime, Sampson Stainforth, George Story.]

the ill consequences which were likely to ensue. He says himself, that to touch this point was at one time to touch the apple of his eye: and in his writings he carefully stated, that the preachers were permitted by him, but not appointed. One of those clergymen, who would gladly, in their sphere, have co-operated with the Wesleys, had they not disliked the extravagances of Methodism, and foreseen the schism to which it was leading, objected to this distinction.

But Wesley had so often been called upon to defend himself, that he perfectly understood the strength of his ground.

He justified the measure, by showing how it had arisen: a plain account of the whole proceeding was, he thought, the best defence of it.

Zeal was the only qualification which he required. If the aspirant possessed no other requisite for his work, and failed to produce an effect upon his hearers, his ardour was soon cooled, and he withdrew quietly from the field; but such cases were not very frequent. The gift of voluble utterance is the commonest of all gifts; and when the audience are in sympathy with the speaker, they are easily affected: the understanding makes no demand, provided the passions find their food. But, on the other hand, when enthusiasm was united with strength of talents and of character, Wesley was a skilful preceptor, who knew how to discipline the untutored mind, and to imbue it thoroughly with his system. He strongly impressed upon his preachers the necessity of reading to improve themselves. In reproving and advising one who had neglected this necessary discipline, he points out to him the ill consequences of that neglect.

CHAPTER XIX.

PROVISION FOR THE LAY PREACHERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.—KINGSWOOD SCHOOL.—THE CONFERENCE.

AT first there was no provision made for the lay preachers. The enthusiasts who offered themselves to the work literally took no thought for the morrow, what they should eat, nor what they should drink, nor yet for the body what they should put on. They trusted in Him who feedeth the fowls of the air, and who sent His ravens to Elijah in the wilderness. "He who had a staff," says one of these first itinerants, "might take one; he who had none might go without." They were lodged and fed by some of the Society wherever they went; and when they wanted clothes, if they were not supplied by individual friends, they represented their necessity to the stewards. St. Francis and his followers did not commit themselves with more confidence to the care of Providence, nor with a more entire disregard of all human means. But the Friars Minorite were marked by their habit for privileged, as well as peculiar persons; and as they professed poverty, the poorer and the more miserable their appearance, the greater was the respect which they obtained from the people. In England, rags were no recommendation; and it was found a great inconvenience that the popular itinerants should be clothed in the best apparel, while the usefulness of their fellows, who were equally devoted to the cause, was lessened by the shabbiness of their appearance. To remedy this evil, it was at length agreed that every circuit should allow its preacher

three pounds per quarter, to provide himself with clothing and books.

But farther relief was still necessary for those married preachers who gave themselves up wholly to the service of Methodism. Their boys, when they grew too big to be under the mother's direction, were in a worse state than other children, and were exposed to a thousand temptations, having no father to control and instruct them.

Some tracts upon education had led Wesley to consider the defects of English schools: the mode of teaching, defective as that is, he did not regard; it was the moral discipline which fixed his attention; and in founding a seminary for his own people, whose steady increase he now contemplated as no longer doubtful, he resolved to provide, as far as possible, against all the evils of the existing institutions. The first point was to find a situation not too far from a great town, which would be very inconvenient for so large a household as he was about to establish, nor yet too near, and much less in it. He chose a spot, three miles from Bristol, in the middle of Kingswood, on the side of a small hill, sloping to the west, sheltered from the east and north, and affording room for large gardens. He built the house of a size to contain fifty children, besides masters and servants, reserving one room and a little study for his own use.

The first rule respecting scholars was, that no child should be admitted after he was twelve years old; before that age, it was thought he could not well be rooted either in bad habits or ill principles: he resolved also not to receive any that came to hand; but, if possible, "only such as had some thoughts of God,

and some desire of saving their souls; and such whose parents desired they should not be almost, but altogether Christians." Accordingly he proclaimed, that the children of *tender parents* had no business there, and that no child should be received, unless his parents would agree that he should observe all the rules of the house, and that they would not take him from school, no, not for a day, till they took him for good and all. "The reasonableness of this uncommon rule," says Wesley, "is shown by constant experience: for children may unlearn as much in one week, as they have learned in several; nay, and contract a prejudice to exact discipline, which never can be removed."

The children were to rise at four, winter and summer: this Wesley said he knew, by constant observation, and by long experience, to be of admirable use, either for preserving a good or improving a bad constitution; and he affirmed that it was of peculiar service in almost all nervous complaints, both in preventing and in removing them. They were to spend the time till five in private, partly in reading, partly in singing, partly in prayer, and in self-examination and meditation, those that were capable of it. Poor boys! they had better have spent it in sleep. From five till seven they breakfasted and walked, or worked, the master being with them; for the master was constantly to be present; and there were no holidays, and no play, on any day. Wesley had learnt a sour German proverb, saying, "He that plays when he is a child, will play when he is a man"; and he had forgotten an English one, proceeding from good nature and good sense, which tells us by what kind of discipline Jack may be made a dull boy. They were to work in fair weather, according to their strength,

in the garden; on rainy days, in the house, always in presence of a master; for they were never, day or night, to be alone. The school-hours were from seven to eleven, and from one to five: eight was the hour for going to bed; they slept in one dormitory, each in a separate bed; a master lay in the same room, and a lamp was kept burning there. Their food was as simple as possible, and two days in the week no meat was allowed.

The things to be taught there make a formidable catalogue in the founder's plan: reading, writing, arithmetic; English, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew; history, geography, chronology, rhetoric, logic, ethics, geometry, algebra; natural philosophy, and metaphysics. No Roman author was to be read, who had lived later than the Augustan age, except certain selections from Juvenal, Persius, and Martial. This was carrying classical puritanism to an extreme; and it indicates no very sound judgment that Wesley should have preferred a few of the modern Latin writers to supply the place of those whom he rejected. The classics which were retained were to be carefully expurgated; there had been a time when he was for interdicting them altogether, as improper to be used in the education of Christian youth, but this folly he had long outgrown.

The school was opened in 1748: in two or three months there were twenty-eight scholars, notwithstanding the strictness of the discipline; and so little was economy in education understood in those days, that there was an establishment of six masters for them. "From the very beginning," says Wesley, "I met with all sorts of discouragements. Cavillers, and prophets of evil, were on every side. An hundred objections were made, both

to the whole design and every particular branch of it, especially by those from whom I had reason to expect better things. Notwithstanding which, through God's help, I went on; wrote an English, a Latin, a Greek, a Hebrew, and a French grammar; and printed *Prælectiones Pueriles*, with many other books, for the use of the school." In making his grammars, Wesley rejected much of the rubbish with which such books are encumbered: they might have been simplified still farther; but it was reserved for Dr. Bell, the friend of children, to establish the principle in education, that every lesson should be made perfectly intelligible to the child.

Upon visiting the school a year after its establishment, he found that several rules had been habitually neglected; and he judged it necessary to send away some of the children, and suffer none to remain who were not clearly satisfied with them, and determined to observe them all. By the second year the scholars had been reduced from twenty-eight to eighteen: it is marvellous indeed that any but the sons of the preachers should have remained; that any parents should have suffered their children to be bred up in a manner which would inevitably, in ninety-nine cases out of an hundred, either disgust them with religion, or make them hypocrites. The house was in a state of complete anarchy. One of the masters was so rough and disobliging, that the children were little profited by him: a second, though honest and diligent, was rendered contemptible by his person and manner: the third had been useful, till the fourth set the boys against him; and the two others were weighed down by the rest, who neither observed the rules in the school nor out of it. To crown all, the housekeeper neglected her duty, being taken up with thoughts of another kind;

and the four maids were divided into two parties. This pitiful case he published for the information of the Society, and cut down the establishment to two masters, a housekeeper, and a maid. Two of the elder boys were dismissed as incorrigible, out of four or five who were "very uncommonly wicked," (a very uncommon proportion of wicked boys out of eighteen,) and five more soon went away. Still it went on badly: four years afterwards he speaks of endeavouring once more to bring it into order.

Provision had thus been made for the maintenance of the preachers' families, and the education of their sons. A Conference, to which Wesley, in the year 1744, invited his brother Charles, four other clergymen, who co-operated with him, and four of his lay preachers, was from that time held annually, and became the general assembly, in which the affairs of the Society were examined and determined. They began their first meeting by recording their desire, "that all things might be considered as in the immediate presence of God; that they might meet with a single eye, and as little children who had everything to learn; that every point which was proposed might be examined to the foundation; that every person might speak freely whatever was in his heart; and that every question which might arise should be thoroughly debated and settled." There was no reason, they said, to be afraid of doing this, lest they should overturn their first principles: for if they were false, the sooner they were overturned the better; if they were true, they would bear the strictest examination. They determined, in the intermediate hours of this Conference, to visit none but the sick, and to spend all the time that remained in retirement; giving themselves

to prayer for one another, and for a blessing upon this their labour. With regard to the judgment of the majority, they agreed that, in speculative things, each could only submit so far as his judgment should be convinced; and that, in every practical point, each would submit, so far as he could, without wounding his conscience. Farther than this, they maintained, a Christian could not submit to any man or number of men upon earth; either to council, bishop, or convocation.

CHAPTER XX.

WESLEY'S DOCTRINES AND OPINIONS.

WESLEY never departed willingly or knowingly from the doctrines of the Church of England, in which he had been trained up, and with which he was conscientiously satisfied, after full and free inquiry. Upon points which have not been revealed, but are within the scope of reason, he formed opinions for himself, which were generally clear, consistent with the Christian system, and creditable, for the most part, both to his feelings and his judgment. But he laid no stress upon them, and never proposed them for more than they were worth. In the following connected view of his scheme, care has been taken to preserve his own words, as far as possible, for the sake of fidelity.

The moral, or, as he sometimes calls it, the Adamic law, he traced beyond the foundation of the world, to that period, unknown indeed to men, but doubtless enrolled in the annals of eternity, when the morning stars first sang together, being newly called into existence. It pleased the Creator to make these His first

born sons intelligent beings, that they might know Him who created them. For this end He endued them with understanding to discern truth from falsehood, good from evil; and, as a necessary result of this, with liberty, —a capacity of choosing the one, and refusing the other. By this they were likewise enabled to offer Him a free and willing service; a service rewardable in itself, as well as most acceptable to their gracious Master. The law which He gave them was a complete model of all truth, so far as was intelligible to a finite being; and of all good, so far as angelic natures were capable of embracing it. And it was His design herein to make way for a continued increase of their happiness, seeing every instance of obedience to that law would both add to the perfection of their nature, and entitle them to a higher reward, which the righteous Judge would give in its season. In like manner, when God, in His appointed time, had created a new order of intelligent beings— when He had raised man from the dust of the earth, breathed into him the breath of life, and caused him to become a living soul, He gave to this free intelligent creature the same law as to His first-born children; not written, indeed, upon tables of stone, or any corruptible substance, but engraven on his heart by the finger of God, written in the inmost spirit, both of men and angels, to the intent it might never be afar off, never hard to be understood, but always at hand, and always shining with clear light, even as the sun in the midst of heaven. Such was the original of the law of God. With regard to man, it was coeval with his nature; but with regard to the elder sons of God, it shone in its full splendour, "or ever the mountains were brought forth, or the earth, and the round world were made."

Man was made holy, as He that created him is holy: perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect. As God is love, so man, dwelling in love, dwelt in God, and God in him. God made him to be an image of His own eternity. To man thus perfect, God gave a perfect law, to which He required full and perfect obedience. He required full obedience in every point. No allowance was made for any falling short: there was no need of any, man being altogether equal to the task assigned him. Man disobeyed this law, and from that moment he died. God had told him, "In the day that thou eatest of that fruit thou shalt surely die." Accordingly, on that day he did die: he died to God, the most dreadful of all deaths. He lost the life of God: he was separated from Him in union with Whom his spiritual life consisted. His soul died. The body dies when it is separated from the soul; the soul, when it is separated from God: but this separation Adam sustained in the day, the hour, when he ate of the forbidden fruit. The threat cannot be understood of temporal death, without impeaching the veracity of God. It must therefore be understood of spiritual death, the loss of the life and image of God. His body likewise became corruptible and mortal; and being already dead in the spirit, dead to God, dead in sin, he hastened on to death everlasting, to the destruction both of body and soul, in the fire never to be quenched.

Why was this? Why are there sin and misery in the world? Because man was created in the image of God: because he is not mere matter, a clod of earth, a lump of clay, without sense or understanding, but a spirit, like his Creator; a being endued not only with sense and understanding, but also with a will. Because, to crown the rest, he was endued with liberty, a power of directing

his own affections and actions, a capacity of determining for himself, or of choosing good or evil. Had not man been endued with this, all the rest would have been of no use. Had he not been a free, as well as an intelligent being, his understanding would have been as incapable of holiness, or any kind of virtue, as a tree or a block of marble. And having this power of choosing good or evil, he chose evil. But in Adam all died, and this was the natural consequence of his fall. He was more than the representative, or federal head, of the human race,—the seed and souls of all mankind were contained in him, and therefore partook of the corruption of his nature. From that time every man who is born into the world bears the image of the Devil, in pride and self-will,—the image of the beast, in sensual appetites and desires. All his posterity were, by this act and deed, entitled to error, guilt, sorrow, fear, pain, disease, and death, and these they have inherited for their portion. The cause has been revealed to us, and the effects are seen over the whole world, and felt in the heart of every individual. But this is no ways inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God, because all may recover, through the second Adam, whatever they lost through the first. Not one child of man finally loses thereby, unless by his own choice. A remedy has been provided, which is adequate to the disease. Yea, more than this, mankind have gained, by the fall, a capacity, first, of being more holy and happy on earth; and, secondly, of being more happy in heaven than otherwise they could have been. For if man had not fallen, there must have been a blank in our faith and in our love. There could have been no such thing as faith in God "so loving the world, that He gave His only Son for us men, and for our salvation"; no faith

in the Son of God, as loving us, and giving Himself for us; no faith in the Spirit of God, as renewing the image of God in our hearts, or raising us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. And the same blank must likewise have been in our love. We could not have loved the Father under the nearest and dearest relation, as delivering up His Son for us: we could not have loved the Son, as bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, and by that one oblation of Himself, once offered, making a full oblation, sacrifice, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world: we could not have loved the Holy Ghost, as revealing to us the Father and the Son, as opening the eyes of our understandings, bringing us out of darkness into His marvellous light, renewing the image of God in our soul, and sealing us unto the day of redemption. So that what is now, in the sight of God, pure religion and undefiled, would then have had no being.

The fall of man is the very foundation of revealed religion. If this be taken away, the Christian system is subverted; nor will it deserve so honourable an appellation as that of a cunningly devised fable. It is a scriptural doctrine: many plain texts directly teach it. It is a rational doctrine, thoroughly consistent with sound reason, though there may be some circumstances relating to it which human reason cannot fathom. It is a practical doctrine, having the closest connection with the life, power, and practice of religion. It leads man to the foundation of all Christian practice, the knowledge of himself, and thereby to the knowledge of God, and of Christ crucified. It is an experimental doctrine. The sincere Christian carries the proof of it in his own bosom. Thus Wesley reasoned; and, from the corruption

of man's nature, or, in his own view of the doctrine, from the death of the soul, he inferred the necessity of a New Birth. He had made that expression obnoxious in the season of his enthusiasm, and it was one of those things which embarrassed him in his sober and maturer years; but he had committed himself too far to retract; and therefore when he saw, and in his own cool judgment disapproved, the extravagances to which the abuse of the term had led, he still continued to use it, and even pursued the metaphor through all its bearings, with a wantonness of ill-directed fancy, of which this is the only instance in all his writings. And in attempting to reconcile the opinion which he held with the doctrine of the Church, he entangled himself in contradictions, like a man catching at all arguments, when defending a cause which he knows to be weak and untenable.

Connected with his doctrine of the New Birth was that of Justification, which he affirmed to be inseparable from it, yet easily to be distinguished, as being not the same, but of a widely different nature. In order of time, neither of these is before the other: in the moment we are justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus, we are also born of the Spirit; but in order of thinking, as it is termed, Justification precedes the New Birth. We first conceive His wrath to be turned away, and then His Spirit to work in our hearts. Justification implies only a relative, the New Birth a real change. God in justifying us, does something *for* us; in begetting us again, He does the work *in* us. The former changes our outward relation to God, so that of enemies we become children. By the latter, our inmost souls are changed, so that of sinners we become saints. The one restores us to the favour, the other to the

image, of God. Justification is another word for pardon. It is the forgiveness of all our sins, and, what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God. The immediate effects are, the peace of God,—a peace that passeth all understanding; and a "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, with joy unspeakable and full of glory." And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins. In that instant we are born again; and when we are born again, then our sanctification begins, and thenceforward we are gradually to "grow up in Him Who is our head." This expression, says Wesley, points out the exact analogy there is between natural and spiritual things. A child is born of a woman in a moment, or, at least, in a very short time. Afterwards, he gradually and slowly grows till he attains to the stature of a man. In like manner a person is born of God in a short time, if not in a moment; but it is by slow degrees that he afterwards grows up to the measure of the full stature of Christ. The same relation, therefore, which there is between our natural birth and our growth, there is also between our New Birth and our Sanctification. And sanctification, though in some degree the immediate fruit of justification, is a distinct gift of God, and of a totally different nature. The one implies what God does *for us* through His *Son*; the other, what He works *in us* by His *Spirit*. Men are no more able, *of themselves*, to think one good thought, to speak one good word, or do one good work, after justification, than before they were justified. When the Lord speaks to our hearts the second time, "*Be clean*," then only the evil root, the carnal mind, is destroyed, and sin subsists no more. A deep conviction, that there is yet in us a carnal mind, shows, beyond all possibility of doubt, the

absolute necessity of a farther change. If there be no such second change, if there be no instantaneous deliverance after justification, if there be none but a gradual work of God, then we must be content, as well as we can, to remain full of sin till death; and if so, we must remain guilty till death, continually deserving punishment. Thus Wesley explains a doctrine which, in his old age, he admitted that he did not find a profitable subject for an unawakened congregation.

This deliverance, he acknowledged, might be gradually wrought in some. I mean, he says, in this sense, they do not advert to the particular moment wherein sin ceases to be. But it is infinitely desirable, were it the will of God, that it should be done instantaneously; that the Lord should destroy sin in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And so He generally does. This, Wesley insisted, was a plain fact, of which there was evidence enough to satisfy any unprejudiced person. And why might it not be instantaneous? he argued. A moment is to Him the same as a thousand years. He cannot want more time to accomplish whatever is His will: and He cannot wait or stay for *worthiness* or *fitness* in the persons He is pleased to honour. Whatever may be thought of the doctrine and of its evidence, it was a powerful one in Wesley's hands. To the confidence, he says, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us *now*, there needs to be added one thing more, a divine evidence and conviction that He doth it. In that hour it is done. "*Thou*, therefore, look for it every moment: you can be no worse, if you are no better, for that expectation; for were you to be disappointed of your hope, still you lose nothing. But you shall not be disappointed of your hope: it will come, it will

not tarry. Look for it then every day, every hour, every moment. Why not this hour? this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may surely know whether you seek it by faith or works. If by works, you want something to be done *first, before* you are sanctified. You think I must first *be*, or *do*, thus or thus. Then you are seeking it by works unto this day. If you seek it by faith, you may expect it *as you are*; then expect it *now*. It is of importance to observe, that there is an inseparable connection between these three points—expect it *by faith*, expect it *as you are*, and expect it *now*. To deny one of them, is to deny them all: to allow one, is to allow them all. Do *you* believe we are sanctified by faith? Be true then to your principle, and look for this blessing just as you are, neither better nor worse; as a poor sinner, that has nothing to pay, nothing to plead, but '*Christ died*.' And if you look for it as you are, then expect it *now*. Stay for nothing! Why should you? Christ is ready, and He is all you want. He is waiting for you! He is at the door. Whosoever thou art who desirest to be forgiven, first believe. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and then thou shalt do all things well. Say not, 'I cannot be accepted yet, because I am not good enough.' Who is good enough, who ever was, to merit acceptance at God's hands? Say not, 'I am not contrite enough; I am not sensible enough of my sins.' I know it. I would to God thou wert more sensible of them, and more contrite a thousand fold than thou art! But do not stay for this. It may be God will make thee so; not before thou believest but by believing. It may be thou wilt not weep much,

till thou lovest much, because thou hast had much forgiven."

Upon these fundamental doctrines of the New Birth, and Justification by Faith, he exhorted his disciples to insist with all boldness, at all times, and in all places: in public, those who were called thereto; and at all opportunities in private. But what is faith? "Not an opinion," said Wesley, "nor any number of opinions put together, be they ever so true. A string of opinions is no more Christian faith, than a string of beads is Christian holiness. It is not an assent to any opinion, or any number of opinions. A man may assent to three, or three-and-twenty creeds: he may assent to all the Old and New Testament, (at least as far as he understands them,) and yet have no Christian faith at all. The faith by which the promise is attained, is represented by Christianity as a power wrought by the Almighty in an immortal spirit, inhabiting a house of clay, to see through that veil into the world of spirits, into things invisible and eternal: a power to discern those things which, with eyes of flesh and blood, no man hath seen, or can see; either by reason of their nature, which (though they surround us on every side) is not perceivable by these gross senses; or by reason of their distance, as being yet afar off in the bosom of eternity. It showeth what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither could it before enter into our heart to conceive; and all this in the clearest light, with the fullest certainty and evidence. For it does not leave us to receive our notice by mere reflection from the dull glass of sense, but resolves a thousand enigmas of the highest concern, by giving faculties suited to things invisible. It is the eye of the new born soul, whereby

every true believer "seeth Him who is invisible." It is the ear of the soul, whereby the sinner "hears the voice of the Son of God, and lives"; the palate of the soul, (if the expression may be allowed,) whereby a believer "tastes the good word and the powers of the world to come"; the feeling of the soul, whereby, "through the power of the Highest overshadowing him," he perceives the presence of Him in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being, and feels the love of God shed abroad in his heart. It is the internal evidence of Christianity, a perpetual revelation, equally strong, equally new, through all the centuries which have elapsed since the Incarnation, and passing now, even as it has done from the beginning, directly from God into the believing soul. Do you suppose time will ever dry up this stream? Oh no! It shall never be cut off—

> *Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.*
> It flows, and as it flows, for ever will flow on.

The historical evidence of revelation, strong and clear as it is, is recognisable by men of learning alone; but this is plain, simple, and level to the lowest capacity. The sum is, "One thing I know: I was blind, but now I see": an argument of which a peasant, a woman, a child, may feel all the force. The traditional evidence gives an account of what was transacted far away, and long ago. The inward evidence is intimately present to all persons, at all times, and in all places. "It is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, if thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ." *This*, then, *is the record*, this is the evidence emphatically so called, *that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*

Why, then, have not all men this faith? Because no man is able to work it in himself: it is a work of Omnipotence. It requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul, than to raise a body that lies in the grave. It is a new creation; and none can create a soul anew, but He who at first created the heavens and the earth. May not your own experience teach you this? said Wesley. Can you give yourself this faith? Is it in your power to see, or hear, or taste, or feel God?—to raise in yourself any perception of God, or of an invisible world?—to open an intercourse between yourself and the world of spirits?—to discern either them or Him that created them?—to burst the veil that is on your heart, and let in the light of eternity? You know it is not. You not only do not, but cannot (by your own strength), thus believe. The more you labour so to do, the more you will be convinced it is the gift of God. It is the *free gift* of God, which He bestows not on those who are *worthy* of His favour, not on such as are *previously holy*, and so *fit* to be crowned with all the blessings of His goodness; but on the ungodly and unholy; on those who, till that hour, were *fit* only for everlasting destruction; those in whom was no good thing, and whose only plea was, God be merciful to me a sinner! No merit, no goodness in man, precedes the forgiving love of God. His pardoning mercy supposes nothing in us but a sense of mere sin and misery; and to all who see and feel, and own their wants, and their utter inability to remove them, God freely gives faith, for the sake of Him "in Whom He is always well pleased." Whosoever thou art, O man, who hast the sentence of death in thyself, unto thee saith the Lord, not, "Do this, perfectly obey all My commands, and live"; but

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Without faith, a man cannot be justified, even though he should have everything else; with faith, he cannot but be justified, though everything else should be wanting. This justifying faith implies not only the personal revelation, the inward evidence of Christianity, but likewise a sure and firm confidence in the individual believer, that Christ died for *his* sins, loved *him*, and gave His life for *him*. And at what time soever, a sinner thus believes, God justifieth him. Repentance, indeed, must have been given him before; but that repentance was neither more nor less than a deep sense of the want of all good, and the presence of all evil; and whatever good he hath or doth from that hour when he first believes in God through Christ, faith does not *find*, but *bring*. Both repentance, and fruits meet for repentance, are in some degree necessary to justification: but they are not necessary in the same *sense* with faith, nor in the same *degree*. Not in the same *degree*; for these fruits are only necessary conditionally, if there be time and opportunity for them. Not in the same *sense*; for repentance and its fruits are only *remotely* necessary—necessary in order to faith; whereas faith is immediately and directly necessary to justification. In like manner, faith is the only condition of sanctification. Every one that believes is sanctified, whatever else he has, or has not. In other words, no man can be sanctified till he believes; every man when he believes is sanctified.

Here Wesley came upon perilous ground. We must be holy in heart and life, before we can be conscious that we are so. But we must love God before we can be holy at all. We cannot love Him till we know that

He loves us; and this we cannot know till His Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. The testimony of the Spirit of God must therefore, he argued, in the very nature of things, be antecedent to the testimony of our own spirit. But he perceived that many had mistaken the voice of their own imagination for this witness of the Spirit, and presumed that they were children of God, while they were doing the works of the Devil. And he was not surprised that many sensible men, seeing the effects of this delusion, should lean toward another extreme, and question whether the witness of the Spirit whereof the apostle speaks, is the privilege of ordinary Christians, and not rather one of those extraordinary gifts which they suppose belonged only to the apostle's age. Yet, when he asks, "How may one, who has the real witness in himself, distinguish it from presumption?" he evades the difficulty, and offers a declamatory reply, "How, I pray, do you distinguish day from night? How do you distinguish light from darkness? or the light of a star, or of a glimmering taper, from the light of the noonday sun?" This is the ready answer of every one who has been crazed by enthusiasm. But Wesley regarded the doctrine as one of the glories of his people, as one grand part of the testimony which God, he said, had given them to bear to all mankind. It was by this peculiar blessing upon them, confirmed by the experience of his children, that this great evangelical truth, he averred, had been recovered, which had been for many years well-nigh lost and forgotten.

These notions led to the doctrine of Assurance, which he had defended so pertinaciously against his brother Samuel. But upon this point his fervour had abated, and he made a fairer retractation than

was to be expected from the founder of a sect. "Some," said he, "are fond of the expression; I am not: I hardly ever use it. But I will simply declare (having neither leisure nor inclination to draw the sword of controversy concerning it) what are my present sentiments with regard to the *thing* which is usually meant thereby. I believe a few, but very few Christians, have an assurance from God of everlasting salvation: and that is the thing which the apostle terms the plerophory, or full assurance of hope. I believe more have such an assurance of being *now* in the favour of God, as excludes all doubt and fear: and this, if I do not mistake, is what the apostle means by the plerophory, or full assurance of faith. I believe a consciousness of being in the favour of God (which I do not term plerophory, or full assurance, since it is frequently weakened, nay, perhaps interrupted, by returns of doubt or fear) is the common privilege of Christians, fearing God, and working righteousness. Yet I do not affirm there are no exceptions to this general rule. Possibly some may be in the favour of God, and yet go mourning all the day long. (But I believe this is usually owing either to disorder of the body, or ignorance of the gospel promises.) Therefore I have not, for many years, thought a consciousness of acceptance to be essential to justifying faith. And after I have thus explained myself once for all, I think without any evasion or ambiguity, I am sure without any self-contradiction, I hope all reasonable men will be satisfied: and whoever will still dispute with me on this head, must do it for disputing's sake."

The doctrine of Perfection is not less perilous, sure as the expression was to be mistaken by the ignorant

people to whom his discourses were addressed. This, too, was a doctrine which he had preached with inconsiderate ardour at the commencement of his career; and which, as he grew older, cooler, and wiser, he modified and softened down, so as almost to explain it away. He defined it to be a constant communion with God, which fills the heart with humble love; and to this, he insisted, that every believer might attain: yet he admitted that it did not include a power never to think an useless thought, nor speak an useless word. Such a perfection is inconsistent with a corruptible body which makes it impossible always to think right: if, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, he admitted that we must not expect it till after death. To one of his female disciples, who seems to have written to him under a desponding sense of her own imperfection, he replied in these terms: "I want you," he added, "to be *all love*. This is the perfection I believe and teach; and this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high-strained perfection is not. Indeed my judgment is, that (in this case particularly) to overdo, is to undo; and that to set perfection too high, is the most effectual way of driving it out of the world." In like manner he justified the word to Bishop Gibson, by explaining it to mean less than it expressed; so that the bishop replied to him, "Why, Mr. Wesley, if this is what you mean by perfection, who can be against it?" "Man," he says, "in his present state, can no more attain Adamic than angelic perfection. The perfection of which man is capable, while he dwells in a corruptible body, is the complying with that kind command, 'My son, give me thy heart!' It is the loving the Lord his God, with all his heart,

and with all his soul, and with all his mind." But these occasional explanations did not render the general use of the word less mischievous, or less reprehensible. Ignorant hearers took it for what it appeared to mean; and what, from the mouths of ignorant instructors, it was intended to mean. It flattered their vanity and their spiritual pride, and became one of the most popular tenets of the Methodists, precisely because it is one of the most objectionable. Wesley himself repeatedly found fault with his preachers if they neglected to enforce a doctrine so well adapted to gratify their hearers. In one place he says, "The more I converse with the believers in Cornwall, the more am I convinced that they have sustained great loss for want of hearing the doctrine of Christian Perfection clearly and strongly enforced. I see wherever this is not done, the believers grow dead and cold. Nor can this be prevented, but by keeping up in them an hourly expectation of being perfected in love. I say an hourly expectation; for to expect it at death, or some time, hence, is much the same as not expecting it at all." And on another occasion he writes thus: "Here I found the plain reason why the work of God had gained no ground in this circuit all the year. The preachers had given up the Methodist testimony. Either they did not speak of perfection at all, (the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust,) or they spoke of it only in general terms, without urging the believers to go on to perfection, and to expect it every moment: and wherever this is not earnestly done, the work of God does not prosper. As to the word perfection," said he, "it is scriptural; therefore neither you nor I can, in conscience, object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and

teach Him to speak who made the tongue." Thus it was that he attempted to justify to others, and to himself also, the use of language, for persevering in which, after the intemperance of his enthusiasm had abated, there can be no excuse, seeing that all he intended to convey by the obnoxious term might have been expressed without offending the judicious, or deluding the ignorant and indiscreet.

Wesley was not blind to the tendency of these doctrines. "The true gospel," said he, "touches the very edge both of Calvinism and Antinomianism, so that nothing but the mighty power of God can prevent our sliding either into the one or the other." Many of his associates and followers fell into both. He always declared himself clearly and strongly against both; though at the expense of some inconsistency, when he preached of a sanctification which left the subject liable to sin, of an assurance which was not assured, and of an imperfect perfection. But his real opinion could not be mistaken; and few men have combated these pestilent errors with more earnestness or more success. He never willingly engaged in those subtle and unprofitable discussions which have occasioned so much dissension in the Christian world; but upon those points in which speculation is allowable, and error harmless, he freely indulged his imagination.

It was his opinion that there is a chain of beings advancing by degrees from the lowest to the highest point—from an atom of unorganised matter, to the highest of the archangels; an opinion consonant to the philosophy of the bards, and confirmed by science, as far as our physiological knowledge extends. He believed in the ministry both of good and evil angels;

but whether every man had a guardian angel to protect him, as the Romanists hold, and a malignant demon continually watching to seduce him into the ways of sin and death, this he considered as undetermined by revelation, and therefore doubtful. Evil thoughts he held to be infused into the minds of men by the evil principle; and that "as no good is done, or spoken, or thought, by any man, without the assistance of God working together *in* and *with* those that believe in Him; so there is no evil done, or spoken, or thought, without the assistance of the Devil, who worketh with energy in the children of unbelief."

His notions of diabolical agency went farther than this: he imputed to it many of the accidents and discomforts of life,—disease, bodily hurts, storms and earthquakes, and nightmare: he believed that epilepsy was often or always the effect of possession, and that most madmen were demoniacs. A belief in witchcraft naturally followed from these premises; but after satisfying his understanding that supernatural acts and appearances are consistent with the order of the universe, sanctioned by Scripture, and proved by testimony too general and too strong to be resisted, he invalidated his own authority, by listening to the most absurd tales with implicit credulity, and recording them as authenticated facts. He adhered to the old opinion, that the devils were the gods of the heathen; and he maintained, that the words in the Lord's Prayer, which have been rendered *evil*, mean, in the original, *the wicked one*, "emphatically so called, the prince and god of this world, who works with mighty power in the children of disobedience."

One of his most singular notions was conerning the day of judgment. He thought it probable that its

duration would be several thousand years, that the place would be above the earth, and that the circumstances of every individual's life would then be brought forth in full view, together with all their tempers, and all the desires, thoughts, and intents of their hearts. This he thought absolutely necessary for the full display of the glory of God, for the clear and perfect manifestation of His wisdom, justice, power, and mercy. He held the doctrine of the millennium to be scriptural; but he never fell into those wild and extravagant fancies, in which speculations of this kind so frequently end. The Apocalypse is the favourite study of crazy religionists; but Wesley says of it, "Oh, how little do we know of this deep book! at least, how little do *I* know! I can barely conjecture, not affirm, any one point concerning that part of it which is yet unfulfilled."

He entertained some interesting opinions concerning the brute creation, and derived whatever evils inferior creatures endure, or inflict upon each other, from the consequence of the Fall. In Paradise they existed in a state of happiness, enjoying will and liberty: their passions and affections were regular, and their choice always guided by their understanding, which was perfect in its kind. "What," says he, "is the barrier between men and brutes,—the line which they cannot pass? It is not reason. Set aside that ambiguous term; exchange it for the plain word understanding, and who can deny that brutes have this? We may as well deny that they have sight or hearing. But it is this: man is capable of God; the inferior creatures are not. We have no ground to believe that they are in any degree capable of knowing, loving, or obeying God. This is the specific difference between man and brute—the great gulf which they

cannot pass over. And as a loving obedience to God was the perfection of man, so a loving obedience to man was the perfection of brutes."

The kindness of Wesley's nature is apparent in this opinion, and that same kindness produced in him a degree of charity, which has seldom been found in those who aspire to reform a church or to establish a sect. This temper of mind led him to judge kindly of the Romanists, and of heretics of every description, wherever a Christian disposition and a virtuous life were found. He published the lives of several Catholics, and of one Socinian, for the edification of his followers. He believed not only that heathens, who did their duty according to their knowledge, were capable of eternal life; but even that a communion with the spiritual world had sometimes been vouchsafed them. Thus, he affirmed, that the demon of Socrates was a ministering angel, and that Marcus Antoninus received good inspirations, as he has asserted of himself. And where there was no such individual excellence, as in these signal instances, he refused to believe that any man could be precluded from salvation by the accident of his birth-place. Upon this point he vindicated divine justice, by considering the different relation in which the Almighty stands to His creatures, as a creator, and as a governor As a creator, He acts in all things according to His own sovereign will: in that exercise of His power, justice can have no place; for nothing is due to what has no being. According, therefore, to His own good pleasure, He allots the time, the place, the circumstances for the birth of each individual, and gives them various degrees of understanding and of knowledge, diversified in numberless ways.

Wesley was sometimes led to profess a different doctrine, in consequence of discussing questions, which serve rather to sharpen the disputatious faculties than to improve a Christian disposition. Thus he has affirmed, in the Minutes of Conference, that a Heathen, a Papist, or a Church-of-England man, if they die without being sanctified, according to his notions of sanctification, cannot see the Lord. And to the question, Can an unbeliever, whatever he be in other respects, challenge anything of God's justice? the answer is, "absolutely nothing but hell." But the humaner opinion was more congenial to his temper, and in that better opinion he rested.

CHAPTER XXI.

DISCIPLINE OF THE METHODISTS.

It is less surprising that Wesley should have obtained so many followers, than that he should have organised them so skilfully, and preserved his power over them, without diminution, to the end of his long life. Francis of Assisi, and Ignatius Loyola, would have produced little effect, marvellous enthusiasts as they were, unless their enthusiasm had been assisted and directed by wiser heads. Wesley, who in so many other respects may be compared to these great agents in the Catholic world, stands far above them in this. He legislated for the sect which he raised, and exercised an absolute supremacy over his people.

His power over the Conference he rested upon the same plea of prescription; but it had originated with himself; not like his authority over the preachers and

the laity, in a voluntary offer of obedience. He, of his own impulse, had invited several clergymen, who acted with him, and all the lay preachers who at that time served him as sons in the gospel, to meet and advise with him.

In reference to himself, as the person in whom the whole and sole authority was vested, Wesley called his preachers by the name of helpers; and designated as assistants those among them who, for the duties which they discharge, have since been denominated superintendents. It soon became expedient to divide the country into circuits. There were, in the year 1749, twenty in England, two in Wales, two in Scotland, and seven in Ireland. In 1791, the year of Mr. Wesley's death, they had increased to seventy-two in England, three in Wales, seven in Scotland, and twenty-eight in Ireland. Every circuit had a certain number of preachers appointed to it, more or less, according to its extent, under an assistant, whose office it was to admit or expel members, take lists of the societies at Easter, hold quarterly meetings, visit the classes quarterly, keep watch-nights and love-feasts, superintend the other preachers, and regulate the whole business of the circuit, spiritual and temporal.

Some of the itinerant preachers, at one time, entered into trade: the propriety of this was discussed in Conference: it was pronounced evil in itself, and in its consequences, and they were advised to give up every business, except the ministry, to which they were pledged. There was another more easy and tempting way of eking out their scanty stipends, by printing their own spiritual effusions, and availing themselves of the opportunities afforded, by the system

of itinerancy, for selling them. The productions which some of them had set forth, both in verse and prose, were censured as having brought a great reproach upon the Society, and "much hindered the spreading of more profitable books"; and a regulation was made, that the profits, even of those which might be approved and licensed by the founder, should go into the common stock. Being cut off from the resources of authorship, some of them began to quack for the body as well as the soul; and this led to a decision in Conference, that no preacher, who would not relinquish his trade of making and vending pills, drops, balsams, or medicines of any kind, should be considered as a travelling preacher any longer. If their wives sold these things at home, it was said to be well; "but it is not proper for any preacher to hawk them about. It has a bad appearance: it does not well suit the dignity of his calling."

They were restricted also from many indulgences. It was not in Wesley's power, because of the age and country in which he lived, to bind his preachers to a prescribed mode of living by an absolute rule; but he attempted to effect it, as far as circumstances would allow. They were on no account to touch snuff, nor to taste spirituous liquors on any pretence. He declared his own purpose, of eating only vegetables on Fridays, and taking only toast and water in the morning; and he expected the preachers to observe the same kind of fast.

The course of life which was prescribed for the preachers left them little opportunity for the enjoyment of domestic life. Home could scarcely be regarded as a resting-place by men who were never allowed to

be at rest. Wesley insisted upon a frequent and regular change of preachers, because he well knew that the attention of the people was always excited by a new performer in the pulpit. The institutions of the Jesuits allowed an itinerant father of the company to remain three months in a place, unless any other term were specified in his instructions: but Wesley went farther, and thought it injurious, both to the preacher and people, if one of his itinerants should stay six or eight weeks together in one place. "Neither," said he, "can he find matter for preaching every morning and evening; nor will the people come to hear him. Hence he grows cold by lying in bed, and so do the people: whereas, if he never stays more than a fortnight together in one place, he may find matter enough, and the people will gladly hear him." There may, perhaps, have been another motive in Wesley's mind: a preacher, who found himself comfortably settled, with a congregation to whom he had made himself agreeable, might be induced to take root there, throw off his dependence upon the connection, and set up a meeting of his own. Instances of such defection were not wanting, and the frequent change of preachers was the likeliest means of preventing them.

No preacher, according to a rule laid down by Conference, was to preach oftener than twice on a week-day, or three times on the Sabbath. One of these sermons was always to be at five in the morning, whenever twenty hearers could be brought together. As the apostolic Eliot used to say to students, Look to it that ye be morning birds! so Wesley continually inculcated the duty of early rising, as equally good for body and soul. "It helps the nerves," he said, "better than a

thousand medicines; and especially preserves the sight, and prevents lowness of spirits. Early preaching," he said, "is the glory of the Methodists. Whenever this is dropped, they will dwindle away into nothing." He advised his preachers to begin and end always precisely at the time appointed, and always to conclude the service in about an hour; to suit their subject to the audience, to choose the plainest texts, and keep close to the text; neither rambling from it, nor allegorising, nor spiritualising too much. More than once, in his Journal, he has recorded the death of men who were martyrs to long and loud preaching, and he frequently cautioned his followers against it. They were instructed also not to pray above eight or ten minutes at most, without intermission, unless for some pressing reason.

Before an aspirant was admitted upon trial as an itinerant, he was exercised as a local preacher; and many persons remained contentedly in this humbler office, which neither took them from their families, nor interfered with their worldly concerns. They carried on their business, whatever that might be, six days in the week, and preached on the seventh: but no person was admitted to this rank, unless he were thought competent by the preachers of the circuit. The places which they were to visit were determined by the assistant, and their conduct underwent an inquiry every quarter. Without their aid, Methodism could not have been kept up over the whole country, widely as it was diffused; and all that they received from the Society was a little refreshment, at the cost of the people to whom they preached, and perhaps the hire of a horse for the day.

A still more important part was performed by the leaders, who are to Methodism what the non-com-

missioned officers are in an army. The leader was appointed by the assistant: it was his business regularly to meet his class, question them, in order, as to their religious affections and practice, and advise, caution, or reprove, as the case might require. If any members absented themselves from the class-meeting, he was to visit them, and inquire into the cause; and he was to render an account to the officiating preacher, of those whose conduct appeared suspicious, or was in any way reprehensible. By this means, and by the class-paper for every week, which the leaders were required to keep, and regularly produce, the preachers obtained a knowledge of every individual member within their circuit; and, by the class-tickets, which were renewed every quarter, a regular census of the Society was effected. The leaders not only performed the office of drilling the young recruits, they acted also as the tax-gatherers, and received the weekly contributions, of their class, which they paid to the local stewards, and the local stewards to the steward of the circuit.

Thus far the discipline of the Methodists was well devised: if the system itself had been unexceptionable, the spiritual police was perfect. But they were divided into bands as well as classes; and this subdivision, while it answered no one end of possible utility, led to something worse than the worst practice of the Romish church. The men and the women, and the married and the single, met separately in these bands, for the purpose of confessing to each other. They engaged to meet once a-week at least, and to speak, each in order, freely and plainly, the true state of their souls, with the faults they had committed, in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations they had felt during the

week. They were to be asked "as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations"; these four, in particular, at every meeting: What known sin have you committed since our last meeting? What temptations have you met with? How were you delivered? What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not? And before any person entered into one of these bands, a promise of the most unreserved openness was required. The nature, and the inevitable tendency of this mutual inquisition, must be obvious to every reflecting mind: and it is marvellous, that any man should have permitted his wife or his daughter to enter into these bands, where it is not possible for innocence to escape contamination.

The institution of the select society or band was not liable to the same objection. This was to consist of persons who were earnestly athirst for the full image of God, and of those who continually walked in the light of God, having fellowship with the Father and the Son: in other words, of those who had attained to such a degree of spiritual pride, that they professed to be in this state,—the adepts of Methodism, who were not ashamed to take their degree as perfect. Nevertheless, the judicious injunction was given them, that nothing which was spoken at their meetings should be spoken again. Wesley says, he often felt the advantage of these meetings, experienced there, that in the multitude of counsellors there is safety. But they placed the untenable doctrine of perfection in so obtrusive and obnoxious a light, that he found it difficult to maintain them; and they seem not to have become a regular part of the system.

The watch-night was another of Wesley's objectionable institutions. It originated with some reclaimed colliers of Kingswood, who, having been accustomed to sit late on Saturday nights at the ale-house, transferred their weekly meeting, after their conversion, to the school-house, and continued there praying and singing hymns far into the morning. Wesley was advised to put an end to this: but, "upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians," he could see no cause to forbid it; because he overlooked the difference between their times and his own, and shut his eyes to the obvious impropriety of midnight meetings. So he appointed them to be held once a month, near the time of full moon. He also appointed three love-feasts in a quarter: one for the men, a second for the women, and the third for both together; "that we might together eat bread," he says, "as the ancient Christians did, with gladness and singleness of heart. At these love-feasts (so we termed them, retaining the name, as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning) our food is only a little plain cake and water; but we seldom return from them without being fed not only with the meat which perisheth, but with that which endureth to everlasting life." A travelling preacher presides at these meetings: any one who chooses may speak; and the time is chiefly employed in relating what they call their Christian experience. In this point, also, Mr. Wesley disregarded the offence which he gave, by renewing a practice that had notoriously been abolished, because of the abuses to which it led.

Whenever a chapel was built, care was taken that it should be settled on the Methodist plan; that is, that

the property should be vested, not in trustees, but in Mr. Wesley and the Conference. The buildings themselves were of the plainest kind: it was difficult to raise money even for these; but Mr. Wesley had the happy art of representing that as a matter of principle, which was a matter of necessity; and, in the tastelessness of their chapels, the Methodists were only upon a level with the dissenters of every description. The octagon, which, of all architectural forms, is the ugliest, he preferred to any other, and wished it to be used wherever the ground would permit: but it has not been generally followed. The directions were, that the windows should be sashes, opening downwards; that there should be no tub-pulpits, and no backs to the seats; and that the men and women should sit apart. A few years before his death, the committee in London proposed to him that families should sit together, and that private pews might be erected: "thus," he exclaims, "overthrowing, at one blow, the discipline which I have been establishing for fifty years!" But, upon farther consideration, they yielded to his opinion.

He prided himself upon the singing in his meeting-houses: there was a talent in his family both for music and verse; and he availed himself, with great judgment, of both. A collection of hymns was published for the Society, some few of which were selected from various authors; some were his own composition; but far the greater part were by his brother Charles. Perhaps no poems have ever been so devoutly committed to memory as these, nor quoted so often upon a death-bed. The manner in which they were sung tended to impress them strongly on the mind: the tune was made wholly subservient to the words, not the words to the tune.

He especially enjoined that the whole congregation should sing, that there should be no repetition of words, no dwelling upon disjointed syllables, and that they should not sing in parts, but with one heart and voice, in one simultaneous and uninterrupted feeling.

The preachers were forbidden to introduce any hymns of their own composing: in other respects they had great latitude allowed them: they might use the Liturgy, if they pleased, or an abridgment of it, which Mr. Wesley had set forth; or they might discard it altogether, and substitute an extemporaneous service, according to their own taste and that of the congregation. Like the Jesuits, in this respect, they were to adapt themselves to all men. The service was not long: Wesley generally concluded it within the hour.

CHAPTER XXII.

METHODISM IN WALES AND IN SCOTLAND.

Upon Wesley's first journey into Wales, he thought that most of the inhabitants were indeed *ripe for the gospel.* This opinion was formed during a journey through the most civilised part of South Wales. He was not deceived in judging that the Welsh were a people highly susceptible of such impressions as he designed to make; but he found himself disabled in his progress, by his ignorance of their language.

This difficulty was insuperable. He found, however, a few Welsh clergymen, who entered into his views with honest ardour, and an extravagance of a new kind grew up in their congregations. After the preaching was over, any one who pleased gave out a verse of a hymn; and

this they sung over and over again, with all their might and main, thirty or forty times, till some of them worked themselves into a sort of drunkenness or madness: they were then violently agitated, and leaped up and down, in all manner of postures, frequently for hours together. This was the beginning of the Jumpers.

Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, the remarkable men who made the secession from the Scotch Church, invited Whitefield into Scotland, before his breach with Wesley. Accordingly, in the year 1741, he accepted the invitation.

He made many other visits to Scotland; and there, indeed, he seems to have obtained that introduction to persons of rank which in its consequences led to the establishment of a college for Calvinistic Methodism in England. But he aimed at nothing more than could be produced by his own preaching: it was neither congenial to his talents nor his views to organise a body of followers; and, in the intervals between his visits, the seed which he had scattered was left to grow up, or to wither as it might.

Wesley had other views: his aim, wherever he went, was to form a society. It was not till ten years after his former colleague had first visited Scotland, that he resolved to go there. A reconciliation had then taken place between them,—for enmity could not be lasting between two men who knew each other's sincerity and good intentions so well,—and Whitefield would have dissuaded him from going. "You have no business there," he said; "for your principles are so well known, that, if you spoke like an angel, none would hear you; and if they did, you would have nothing to do but to dispute with one and another from morning to night."

Wesley replied, "If God sends me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to dispute; for I will studiously avoid controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity; and if any still begin to dispute, they may, but I will not dispute with them."

But it was Wesley's fortune to meet with an obstacle in Scotland more fatal to Methodism than the fiercest opposition would have been. Had his followers been more generally opposed, they would have multiplied faster: opposition would have inflamed their zeal; it was neglected, and died away. From time to time he complains, in his Journal, of the cold insensibility of the people.

Wesley endeavoured to account for this mortifying failure, and to discover "what could be the reason why the hand of the Lord (Who does nothing without a cause) was almost entirely stayed in Scotland." He imputed it to the unwillingness of those, who were otherwise favourably inclined, to admit the preaching of illiterate men; and to the rude bitterness and bigotry of those who regarded an Arminian as an Infidel, and the Church of England as bad as the Church of Rome. The Scotch bigots, he said, were beyond all others.

The real cause of failure was, that Methodism was not wanted—that there was no place for it: the discipline of the kirk was not relaxed; the clergy possessed great influence over their parishioners; the children were piously brought up; the population had not outgrown the church establishment; and the Scotch, above all other people, deserved the praise of being a frugal, industrious, and religious nation.

Obvious as this is, Wesley seems not to have

perceived it: and it is evident that he regarded both the forms and discipline of the Church of Scotland, with a disposition rather to detect what was objectionable, than to acknowledge what was good.

He did, however, this justice to the Scotch, that he acknowledged they were never offended at plain dealing; and that, in this respect, they were a pattern to all mankind. Nor did he ever meet with the slightest molestation from mobs, or the slightest insult.

Looking for any cause of failure, rather than the real one, Wesley imputed the want of success in Scotland to the disposition which his preachers manifested to remain stationary there. "We are not called," he says, "to sit still in one place: it is neither for the health of our souls nor bodies: we will have travelling preachers in Scotland, or none. I will serve the Scotch as we do the English, or leave them. While I live, itinerant preachers shall be itinerants, if they choose to remain in connection with us. The *thing* is fixed: the *manner* of effecting it, is to be considered."

CHAPTER XXIII.

METHODISM IN IRELAND.

JOHN WESLEY landed in 1747 in Dublin, where one of his preachers, by name Williams, had formed a small society. The curate of St. Mary's lent him his pulpit, and his first essay was not very promising; for he preached from it, he says, to as gay and senseless a congregation as he had ever seen. The clergyman who gave this proof of his good will disapproved, however, of his employing lay preachers, and of his preaching any-

where but in a church; and told him, that the Archbishop of Dublin was resolved to suffer no such irregularities in his diocese. Wesley therefore called on the archbishop, and says, that, in the course of a long conversation, he answered abundance of objections; some perhaps, he removed; and if he did not succeed in persuading the prelate of the utility of Methodism, he must certainly have satisfied him that he was not to be prevented from pursuing his own course.

Wesley's first impressions of the Irish were very favourable: a people so generally civil he had never seen, either in Europe or America. Even when he failed to impress them, they listened respectfully. "What a nation," he says, "is this! every man, woman, and child, except a few of the great vulgar, not only patiently, but gladly, suffer the work of exhortation!" And he called them an immeasurably loving people. There was, indeed, no cause to complain of insensibility in his hearers, as in Scotland. He excited as much curiosity and attention as he could desire; but if Methodism had been opposed by popular outcry, and by mobs, in England, it was not to be expected that it could proceed without molestation in Ireland. In Wesley's own words, "the roaring lion began to shake himself here also."

Wesley himself, while he shuddered at the ferocious character of Irish history, loved the people; and said he had seen as real courtesy in their cabins as could be found at St. James's or the Louvre. He found them more liberal than the English Methodists, and he lived to see a larger society at Dublin than any in England, except that in the metropolis.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WESLEY IN MIDDLE AGE.

It is with the minds of men as with fermented liquors; they are long in ripening, in proportion to their strength. Both the Wesleys had much to work off; and the process, therefore, was of long continuance. In Charles it was perfected about middle life. His enthusiasm had spent itself, and his opinions were modified by time, as well as sobered by experience. In the forty-first year of his age, he was married by his brother, at Garth, in Brecknockshire, to Miss Sarah Gwynne. "It was a solemn day," says John, "such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage." For a while he continued to itinerate, as he had been wont; but, after a few years, he became a settled man, and was contented to perform the duties and enjoy the comforts of domestic life.

John also began to think of marriage, after his brother's example, though he had published "Thoughts on a Single Life," wherein he advised all unmarried persons, who were able to receive it, to follow the counsel of our Lord and of St. Paul, and "remain single for the kingdom of heaven's sake." He did not, indeed, suppose that such a precept could have been intended for the many, and assented fully to the sentence of the apostle, who pronounced the "forbidding to marry to be a doctrine of devils." Some notion, however, that the marriage state was incompatible with holiness, seems, in consequence perhaps of this treatise, to have obtained ground among some of his followers at one time; for it was asked, at the Conference of 1745, whether a

sanctified believer could be capable of marriage. The answer was, "Why should he not?" And probably the question was asked for the purpose of thus condemning a preposterous opinion. When he himself resolved to marry, it appears that he made both his determination and his choice without the knowledge of Charles; and that Charles, when he discovered the affair, found means, for reasons which undoubtedly he must have thought sufficient, to break off the match. But John was offended, and for a time there was a breach of that union between them which had never before been disturbed. It was not long before he made a second choice, and, unfortunately for himself, no one then interfered.

The lady whom he married was a widow, by name Vizeille, with four children, and an independent fortune; but he took care that this should be settled upon herself, and refused to have any command over it. It was agreed also, before their marriage, that he should not preach one sermon, nor travel one mile the less on that account: "If I thought I should," said he, "as well as I love you, I would never see your face more." And in his Journal at this time he says, "I cannot understand how a Methodist preacher can answer it to God, to preach one sermon, or travel one day less, in a married than in a single state. In this respect, surely, it remaineth, that they who have wives, be as though they had none." For a little while she travelled with him; but that mode of life, and perhaps the sort of company to which, in the course of their journeys, she was introduced, soon became intolerable—as it must necessarily have been to any woman who did not enter wholly into his views, and partake of his enthusiasm. But, of all women, she is

said to have been the most unsuited to him. Fain would she have made him, like Marc Antony, give up all for love; and being disappointed in that hope, she tormented him in such a manner, by her outrageous jealousy, and abominable temper, that she deserves to be classed in a triad with Xantippe and the wife of Job, as one of the three bad wives. Wesley, indeed, was neither so submissive as Socrates, nor so patient as the man of Uz. He knew that he was by nature the stronger vessel, of the more worthy gender, and lord and master by law; and that the words, *honour and obey*, were in the bond. "Know me," said he, in one of his letters to her, "and know yourself. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more: do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money, or praise; be content to be a private insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty, which I claim by the laws of God and man: leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience; then shall I govern you with gentle sway, even as Christ the Church." He reminded her that she had laid to his charge things that he knew not, robbed him, betrayed his confidence, revealed his secrets, given him a thousand treacherous wounds, and made it her business so to do, under the pretence of vindicating her own character; "whereas," said he, "of what importance is your character to mankind? If you were buried just now, or if you had never lived, what loss would it be to the cause of God?" This was very true, but not very conciliating; and there are few stomachs which could bear to have humility administered in such doses.

Had Mrs. Wesley been capable of understanding her husband's character, she could not possibly have been

jealous; but the spirit of jealousy possessed her, and drove her to the most unwarrantable actions. It is said that she frequently travelled a hundred miles, for the purpose of watching, from a window, who was in the carriage with him when he entered a town. She searched his pockets, opened his letters, put his letters and papers into the hands of his enemies, in hopes that they might be made use of to blast his character; and sometimes laid violent hands upon him, and tore his hair. She frequently left his house, and, upon his earnest entreaties, returned again; till, after having thus disquieted twenty years of his life, as far as it was possible for any domestic vexations to disquiet a man whose life was passed in locomotion, she seized on part of his Journals, and many other papers, which were never restored, and departed, leaving word that she never intended to return. He simply states the fact in his Journal, saying, that he knew not what the cause had been; and he briefly adds, *Non eam reliqui, non dimisi, non revocabo*; I did not forsake her, I did not dismiss her, I will not recall her. Thus, summarily, was a most injudicious marriage dissolved. Mrs. Wesley lived ten years after the separation, and is described in her epitaph as a woman of exemplary piety, a tender parent, and a sincere friend: the tombstone says nothing of her conjugal virtues.

In the first Conference it was asked, "Do you not entail a schism on the Church? Is it not probable that your hearers after your death, will be scattered into all sects and parties? or that they will form themselves into a distinct sect?" The answer was, "We are persuaded the body of our hearers will, even after our death, remain in the Church, unless they be thrust out.

We believe, notwithstanding, either that they will be thrust out, or that they will leaven the whole Church. We do, and will do, all we can to prevent those consequences which are supposed likely to happen after our death; but we cannot, with a good conscience, neglect the present opportunity of saving souls while we live, for fear of consequences which may possibly or probably happen after we are dead." Five years afterwards the assistants were charged to exhort all those who had been brought up in the Church, constantly to attend its service, to question them individually concerning this, to set the example themselves, and to alter every plan which interfered with it. "Is there not," it was said, "a cause for this? Are we not, unawares, by little and little, tending to a separation from the Church? Oh, remove every tendency thereto with all diligence! Let all our preachers go to Church. Let all our people go constantly. Receive the sacrament at every opportunity. Warn all against niceness in hearing,—a great and prevailing evil: warn them likewise against despising the prayers of the Church; against calling our Society *a Church*, or *the Church*; against calling our preachers *ministers*, our houses *meeting-houses*: call them plain preaching-houses. Do not license them as such. The proper form of a petition to the Judges is, 'A.B. desires to have his house in C. licenced for public worship.' Do not license yourself till you are constrained, and then not as a *Dissenter*, but a Methodist preacher. It is time enough when you are prosecuted, to take the oaths; thereby you are licensed."

The leaven of ill-will towards the Church was introduced among the Methodists by those dissenters who joined them. Wesley saw whence it proceeded, and was

prepared to resist its effect by the feelings which he had imbibed from his father, as well as by his sense of duty. But there were other causes which increased and strengthened the tendency that had thus been given. It is likely that, when the Nonjurors disappeared as a separate party, many of them would unite with the Methodists, being a middle course between the Church and the dissenters, which required no sacrifice either of principle or of pride. Having joined them, their leaning would naturally be toward a separation from the establishment. But the main cause is to be found in the temper of the lay preachers, who, by an easy and obvious process, were led to conclude, that they were as much authorised to exercise one part of the ministerial functions as another. They had been taught to consider, and were accustomed to represent the clergy in the most unfavourable light. Wesley sometimes reprehended this in strong terms: but, upon this point, he was not consistent; and whenever he had to justify the appointment of lay preachers, he was apt, in self-defence, to commit the fault which, at other times, he condemned.

"As yet," he said, "we have not taken one step farther than we were convinced was our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this that we have preached abroad, prayed *extempore*, formed societies, and permitted preachers who were not espiscopally ordained. And were we pushed on this side, were there no alternative allowed, we should judge it our bounden duty, rather wholly to separate from the Church, than to give up any one of these points; therefore, if we cannot stop a separation without stopping lay preachers, the case is clear, we cannot stop it at all. But, if we permit them, should we

not do more?—should we not appoint them, rather? since the bare permission puts the matter quite out of our hands, and deprives us of all our influence. In great measure, it does: therefore, to appoint them is far more expedient, if it be lawful: but is it lawful for presbyters, circumstanced as we are, to appoint other ministers? This is the very point wherein we desire advice, being afraid of leaning to our own understanding."

An inclination to episcopise was evidently shown in this language; but Wesley did not yet venture upon the act, in deference, perhaps, to his brother's determined and principled opposition. Many of his preachers, however, were discontented with the rank which they held in public opinion, thinking that they were esteemed inferior to the dissenting ministers, because they did not assume so much: they therefore urged him to take upon himself the episcopal office, and ordain them, that they might administer the ordinances; and as he could not be persuaded to this, they charged him with inconsistency, for tolerating lay preaching, and not lay administering. This charge he repelled: "My principle," said he, "is this: I submit to every ordinance of man, wherever I do not conceive there is an absolute necessity for acting contrary to it. Consistently with this, I *do* tolerate lay preaching, because I conceive there is an absolute necessity for it, inasmuch as were it not, thousands of souls would perish everlastingly. Yet I do *not* tolerate lay administering; because I do not conceive there is any such necessity for it, seeing it does not appear that one soul will perish for want of it." This was, of course, called persecution, by those whom his determination disappointed; and they accused him of injustice in denying them the liberty of acting according to their own

conscience. They thought it quite right that they should administer the Lord's Supper, and believed it would do much good: he thought it quite wrong, and believed it would do much hurt. "I have no right over your consciences," he said, "nor you over mine: therefore, both you and I must follow our own conscience. You believe it is a duty to administer: do so, and therein follow your own conscience. I verily believe it is a sin, which, consequently, I dare not *tolerate*; and herein I follow mine." And he argued, that it was no persecution to separate from his society those who practised what he believed was contrary to the will and destructive of the word of God.

Among the converts to Methodism at this time were Mr. Berridge, vicar of Everton, in Bedfordshire, and Mr. Hickes, vicar of Wrestlingworth, in the same neighbourhood. These persons, by their preaching, produced the same contagious convulsions in their hearers, as had formerly prevailed at Bristol; and though time had sobered Mr. Wesley's feelings, and matured his judgment, he was so far deceived, that he recorded the things which occurred, not as psychological, but as religious cases. They were of the most frightful and extraordinary kind.

Warburton had censured these things with his strong sense and powers of indignant sarcasm; and they had been exposed still more effectually by Bishop Lavington, of Exeter, in "A Comparison between the Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists." Here Wesley, who was armed and proof at other points, was vulnerable. He could advance plausible arguments, even for the least defensible of his doctrines; and for his irregularities, some that were valid and incontestable. On that score

he was justified by the positive good which Methodism had done, and was doing; but here he stood convicted of a credulity discreditable to himself, and dangerous in its consequences; the whole evil of scenes so disorderly, so scandalous, and so frightful, was distinctly seen by his opponents; and perhaps they did not make a sufficient allowance for the phenomena of actual disease, and the manner in which, upon their first appearance, they were likely to affect a mind, heated as his had been at the commencement of his career. In all his other controversies, Wesley preserved that urbane and gentle tone, which arose from the genuine benignity of his disposition and manners; but he replied to Bishop Lavington with asperity: the attack had galled him; he could not but feel that his opponent stood upon the vantage ground; and, evading the main charge, he contented himself in his reply with explaining away certain passages, which were less obnoxious than they had been made to appear, and disproving some personal charges which the Bishop had repeated upon evidence that appeared, upon inquiry, not worthy of the credit he had given to it. But Wesley's resentments were never lasting: of this, a passage in his Journal, written a few years afterwards, affords a pleasing proof. Having attended service at Exeter Cathedral, he says, "I was well pleased to partake of the Lord's Supper with my old opponent, Bishop Lavington. Oh, may we sit down together in the kingdom of our Father!" He understood the happiness of his temper in this respect, and says of it, "I cannot but stand amazed at the goodness of God. Others are most assaulted on the weak side of their soul; but with me it is quite otherwise. If I have any strength at all, (and I have none but what I *received*,) it is in forgiving injuries;

and on this very side am I assaulted more frequently than on any other. Yet leave me not here one hour to myself, or I shall betray myself and Thee!"

His disposition to believe whatever he was told, however improbable the fact, or insufficient the evidence, was not confined to preternatural tales. He listened to every old woman's nostrum for a disease, and collected so many of them, that he thought himself qualified at last to commence practising in medicine. Accordingly he announced in London his intention of giving physic to the poor, and they came for many years in great numbers, till the expense of distributing medicines to them was greater than the Society could support. At the same time, for the purpose of enabling people to cure themselves, he published his collection of receipts, under the title of "Primitive Physic; or, an easy and natural Method of curing most Diseases." In his preface he showed, that the art of healing was originally founded on experiments, and so became traditional: inquiring men, in process of time began to reason upon the facts which they knew, and formed theories of physic, which, when thus made theoretical, was soon converted into a mystery and a craft. Some lovers of mankind, however, had still from time to time endeavoured to bring it back to its ancient footing, and make it, as it was at the beginning, a plain intelligible thing; professing to know nothing more than that certain maladies might be removed by certain medicines; and his mean hand, he said, had made a like attempt, in which he had only consulted experience, common sense, and the common interest of mankind.

The previous directions which he gave for preventing diseases, were in general judicious. He advised early

hours, regular exercise, plain diet, and temperance; and he pointed out, not without effect, the physical benefits which resulted from a moral and religious life. "All violent and sudden passions," he said, "dispose to, or actually throw people into acute diseases. The slow and lasting passions, such as grief, and hopeless love, bring on chronical diseases. Till the passion which caused the disease is calmed, medicine is applied in vain. The love of God, as it is the sovereign remedy of all miseries so, in particular, it effectually prevents all the bodily disorders the passions introduce, by keeping the passions themselves within due bounds; and, by the unspeakable joy, and perfect calm serenity and tranquillity it gives the mind, it becomes the most powerful of all the means of health and long life." In his directions to the sick, he recommends them to "add to the rest (for it is not labour lost) that old unfashionable medicine, prayer; and to have faith in God, who 'killeth and maketh alive, who bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.'" The book itself must have done great mischief, and probably may still continue so to do; for it has been most extensively circulated, and it evinces throughout a lamentable want of judgment, and a perilous rashness advising sometimes means of ridiculous inefficacy in the most dangerous cases, and sometimes remedies so rude, that it would be marvellous if they did not destroy the patient. He believed, however, that he had cured himself of what was pronounced to be a confirmed consumption, and had every symptom of it, by his favourite prescription for pleurisy, a plaster of brimstone and white of egg, spread upon brown paper. Upon applying this, the pain in his side, he says, was removed in a few minutes, the fever in half an hour; and from

that hour he began to recover strength. His death had been so fully expected, that Whitefield wrote him a farewell letter, in the most affectionate terms, and a consolatory one to his brother Charles. And he himself not knowing, he says, how it might please God to dispose of him, and to prevent vile panegyric, wrote his own epitaph, in these words:

HERE LIETH
THE BODY OF JOHN WESLEY,
A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE BURNING:
WHO DIED OF A CONSUMPTION, IN THE FIFTY-FIRST YEAR OF HIS AGE,
NOT LEAVING, AFTER HIS DEBTS ARE PAID, TEN POUNDS BEHIND HIM;
PRAYING
GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME AN UNPROFITABLE SERVANT!

"He ordered that this (if any) inscription should be placed on his tombstone."

CHAPTER XXV.

PROGRESS OF CALVINISTIC METHODISM.—DEATH OF WHITEFIELD.—FINAL BREACH BETWEEN WESLEY AND THE CALVINISTS.

WHITEFIELD had not continued long at enmity with Wesley. He was sensible that he had given him great and just offence, and he acknowledged this, and asked his pardon. Wesley's was a heart in which resentment never could strike root: the difference between them, therefore, as far as it was personal, was made up; but, upon the doctrines in dispute, they remained as widely

separate as ever, and their respective followers were less charitable than themselves.

Whitefield also had become a married man.

Shortly after his separation from Wesley, some Calvinist dissenters built a large shed for him, near the Foundry, upon a piece of ground which was lent for the purpose, till he should return to America. From the temporary nature of the structure, they called it a Tabernacle, in allusion to the movable place of worship of the Israelites during their journey in the wilderness; and the name being in puritanical taste, became the designation of all the chapels of the Calvinistic Methodists. In this place Whitefield was assisted by Cennick, and others, who sided with him at the division; and he employed lay preachers with less reluctance than Wesley had done; because the liking which he had acquired in America for the old Puritans had in some degree alienated his feelings from the Church, and his predestinarian opinions brought him in contact with the Dissenters. But Whitefield had neither the ambition of founding a separate community, nor the talent for it; he would have contented himself with being the founder of the Orphan House at Savannah, and with the effect which he produced as a roving preacher; and Calvinistic Methodism, perhaps, might never have been embodied into a separate sect, if it had not found a patroness in Selina Countess of Huntingdon.

This "noble and elect lady," as her followers have called her, was daughter of Washington Earl of Ferrers, and widow of Theophilus Earl of Huntingdon. There was a decided insanity in her family. Her sisters-in-law, Lady Betty and Lady Margaret Hastings, were of a religious temper: the former had been the patroness

of the first Methodists at Oxford; the latter had become a disciple, and at length married Wesley's old pupil and fellow-missionary Ingham. Lady Margaret communicated her opinions to the Countess: the Wesleys were called in to her, after a dangerous illness, which had been terminated by the new birth; and her husband's tutor, Bishop Benson, who was sent for afterwards, in hopes that he might restore her to a saner sense of devotion, found all his arguments ineffectual: instead of receiving instructions from him, she was disposed to be the teacher, quoted the Homilies against him, insisted upon her own interpretation of the Articles, and attacked him upon the awful responsibility of his station. All this is said to have irritated him: the emotion which he must needs have felt, might have been more truly, as well as more charitably, interpreted: and when he left her, he lamented that he had ever laid his hands upon George Whitefield. "My lord," she replied, "mark my words! when you come upon your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacence."

"During the Earl's life she restrained herself in deference to his wishes; but, becoming mistress of herself, and of a liberal income, at his death, she took a more decided and public part, and, had means permitted, would have done as much for Methodism as the Countess Matilda did for the Papacy. Upon Whitefield's return from America, in 1748, he was invited to her house at Chelsea, as soon as he landed. And after he had officiated there twice, she wrote to him, inviting him again, that some of the nobility might hear him.

Lord Chesterfield and Bolingbroke were among his auditors at Chelsea: the Countess had done well in

inviting those persons who stood most in need of repentance. The former complimented the preacher with his usual courtliness; the latter is said to have been much moved at the discourse: he invited Whitefield to visit him, and seems to have endeavoured to pass from infidelity to Calvinism, if he could. Lady Huntingdon, flattered, perhaps, by the applause which was bestowed upon the performance, appointed Whitefield one of her chaplains. He, at this time, writing to Mr. Wesley, says, "What have you thought about an union? I am afraid an external one is impracticable. I find, by your sermons, that we differ in principles more than I thought, and I believe we are upon two different plans. My attachment to America will not permit me to abide very long in England; consequently I should but weave a Penelope's web if I formed societies; and, if I should form them, I have not proper assistants to take care of them. I intend, therefore, to go about preaching the Gospel to every creature." In saying that he had "no party to be at the head of," and that, through God's grace, he would have none, Whitefield only disclaimed the desire of placing himself in a situation which he was not competent to fill: at this very time he was sufficiently willing that a party should be formed, of which he might be the honorary head, while the management was in other hands: for he told the elect lady that a leader was wanting; and that that honour had been put on her ladyship by the great Head of the Church, —an honour which had been conferred on few, but which was an earnest of what she was to receive, before men and angels, when time should be no more. That honour Lady Huntingdon accepted. She built chapels in various places, which were called hers, and procured

Calvinistic clergymen to officiate in them. After a time, a sufficient supply of ordained ministers could not be found, and some began to draw back, when they perceived that the course of action in which they were engaged tended manifestly to schism. This, however, did not deter her ladyship from proceeding: she followed the example of Mr. Wesley, and employed laymen without scruple; and as the chapels were called Lady Huntingdon's chapels, the persons who officiated were called Lady Huntingdon's preachers. At length she set up a seminary for such preachers, at Trevecca, in South Wales; and this was called Lady Huntingdon's College, and the Calvinist Methodists went by the name of Lady Huntingdon's connection. The terms of admission were, that the students should be truly converted to God, and resolved to dedicate themselves to His service. During three years they were to be boarded and instructed gratuitously, at her ladyship's cost, and supplied every year with a suit of clothes: at the end of that time they were either to take orders, or enter the ministry among dissenters of any denomination.

Sincere devotee as the Countess was, she retained much of the pride of birth. For this reason Whitefield, who talked of her amazing condescension in patronising him, would have been more acceptable to her than Wesley, even if he had not obtained a preference in her esteem because of his Calvinism; and perhaps this disposition inclined her, unconsciously, to favour a doctrine which makes a privileged order of souls. Wesley, therefore, who neither wanted, nor would have admitted, patron or patroness to be the temporal head of the societies which he had formed. and was as little

likely to act a subordinate part under Lady Huntingdon as under Count Zinzendorf, seems never to have been cordially liked by her, and gradually grew into disfavour. The reconciliation with Whitefield was, perhaps, produced more by a regard to appearances on both sides, than by any feeling on either. Such a wound as had been made in their friendship always leaves a scar, however well it may have healed. They interchanged letters, not very frequently; and they preached occasionally in each other's pulpits; but there was no cordial intercourse, no hearty co-operation. Whitefield saw, and disapproved, in Wesley, that ambition of which the other was not conscious in himself, largely as it entered into the elements of his character: and Wesley, on the other hand, who felt his own superiority in intellect and knowledge, regarded probably as a weakness the homage which was paid by Whitefield to persons in high life. Yet they did justice to each other's intentions and virtues: and old feelings sometimes rose again, as from the dead; like the blossoming of spring flowers in autumn, which remind us that the season of hope and of joyance is gone by. It is pleasant to observe, that this tenderness increased as they advanced toward the decline of life. When Whitefield returned from America to England for the last time, Wesley was struck with the change in his appearance: "he seemed," says he, in his Journal, "to be an old man, being fairly worn out in his Master's service, though he has hardly seen fifty years; and yet it pleases God that I, who am now in my sixty-third year, find no disorder, no weakness, no decay, no difference from what I was at five-and-twenty; only that I have fewer teeth, and more grey hairs."

Lady Huntingdon had collected about her a knot of Calvinistic clergy, some of them of high birth, and abounding as much with bigotry and intolerance as with zeal. Whitefield, however, at this time, to use Wesley's language, breathed nothing but peace and love. "Bigotry," said he, "cannot stand before him, but hides its head wherever he comes. My brother and I conferred with him every day; and, let the honourable men do what they please, we resolved, by the grace of God, to go on hand in hand, through honour and dishonour." Accordingly Wesley preached in the Countess's chapel, where, he says, many were not a little surprised at seeing him, and where it appears that he did not expect to be often invited; for he adds, that he was in no concern whether he preached there again or not. Whitefield and Howel Harris (a man whose genuine charity was no ways corrupted by his opinions) attended at the next Conference.

This union continued till Whitefield returned to America, in 1769, and died there in the following year. A fear of outliving his usefulness had often depressed him: and one day, when, giving way to an irritable temper, he brought tears from one who had not deserved such treatment, he burst into tears himself, and exclaimed, "I shall live to be a poor peevish old man, and everybody will be tired of me!" He wished for a sudden death; and that blessing was so far vouchsafed him, that the illness which proved fatal was only of a few hours' continuance. It was a fit of asthma: when it seized him first, one of his friends expressed a wish that he would not preach so often; and his reply was, "I had rather *wear* out, than *rust* out." He died at Newbury Port, in New England; and, according to

his own desire, was buried before the pulpit, in the Presbyterian Church of that town. Every mark of respect was shown to his remains: all the bells in the town tolled, and the ships in the harbour fired mourning guns, and hung their flags half-mast high. In Georgia, all the black cloth in the stores was bought up, and the church was hung with black: the governor and council men met at the state-house in deep mourning, and went in procession to hear a funeral sermon. Funeral honours also were performed throughout the tabernacles in England. He had been asked who should preach his funeral sermon, in case of his dying abroad: whether it should be his old friend Mr. Wesley; and had always replied, He is the man. Mr. Wesley, therefore, by desire of the executors, preached at the Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road (the high-church of the sect); and in many other places did the same, wishing, he said, to show all possible respect to the memory of so great and good a man. Upon this occasion he expresses a hope, in his Journal, that God has now given a blow to that bigotry which had prevailed for many years; but it broke out, ere long, with more virulence than ever.

JEAN GUILLAUME DE LA FLECHERE was a man of rare talents, and rarer virtue. No age or country has ever produced a man of more fervent piety, or more perfect charity; no Church has ever possessed a more apostolic minister. He was born at Nyon, in the Pays de Vaud, of a respectable Bernese family, descended from a noble house in Savoy. Having been educated for the ministry at Geneva, he found himself unable to subscribe to the doctrine of predestination, and resolved to seek pre-

ferment as a soldier of fortune. Accordingly he went to Lisbon, obtained a commission in the Portuguese service, and was ordered to Brazil. A lucky accident, which confined him to his bed when the ship sailed, saved him from a situation where his fine intellect would have been lost, and his philanthropic piety would have had no room to display itself. He left Portugal for the prospect of active service in the Low Countries; and that prospect also being disappointed by peace, he came over to England, improved himself in the language, and became tutor in the family of Mr. Hill, of Fern Hall in Shropshire. The love of God and of man abounded in his heart; and finding among the Methodists that sympathy which he desired, he joined them, and for a time took to ascetic courses, of which he afterwards acknowledged the error. He lived on vegetables, and for some time on milk and water, and bread: he sat up two whole nights in every week, for the purpose of praying, and reading and meditating on religious things; and on the other nights never allowed himself to sleep, as long as he could keep his attention to the book before him. At length, by the advice of his friends, Mr. Hill, and of Mr. Wesley, whom he consulted, he took orders in the English Church. The ordination took place in the Chapel Royal, St. James's, and, as soon as it was over, he went to the Methodist Chapel in West Street, where he assisted in administering the Lord's Supper. Wesley had never received so seasonable an assistance. "How wonderful are the ways of God!" said he, in his Journal. "When my bodily strength failed, and none in England were able and willing to assist me, He sent me help from the mountains of Switzerland, and an help meet for me in every respect.

Where could I have found such another!" It proved a more efficient and important help than Mr. Wesley could then have anticipated.

Mr. Fletcher (for so he now called himself, being completely anglicised) incurred some displeasure by the decided manner in which he connected himself with the Methodists. Neither his talents nor his virtues were yet understood beyond the circle of his friends. By Mr. Hill's means, however, he was presented to the vicarage of Madeley, in Shropshire, about three years after his ordination. It is a populous village, in which there were extensive collieries and iron-works; and the character of the inhabitants was, in consequence, what, to the reproach and curse of England, it generally is, wherever mines or manufactures of any kind have brought together a crowded population. Mr. Fletcher had at one time officiated there as curate: he now entered upon his duty with zeal proportioned to the arduous nature of the service which he had pledged himself to perform. That zeal made him equally disregardful of appearances and of danger. The whole rents of his small patrimonial estate in the Pays de Vaud were set apart for charitable uses, and he drew so liberally from his other funds for the same purpose, that his furniture and wardrobe were not spared. Because some of his remoter parishioners excused themselves for not attending the morning service, by pleading that they did not awake early enough to get their families ready, for some months he set out every Sunday at five o'clock, with a bell in his hand, and went round the most distant parts of the parish, to call up the people. And wherever hearers could be collected in the surrounding country, within ten or fifteen miles, thither he went to preach to

them on week days, though he seldom got home before one or two in the morning. At first, the rabble of his parishioners resented the manner in which he ventured to reprove and exhort them in the midst of their lewd revels and riotous meetings; for he would frequently burst in upon them, without any fear of the consequence to himself. The publicans and maltmen were his especial enemies. In spite, however, of the opposition which his eccentricities excited, not from the ignorant only, but from some of the neighbouring clergy and magistrates, he won upon the people, rude and brutal as they were, by the invincible benevolence which was manifested in his whole manner of life; till at length his church, which at first had been so scantily attended that he was discouraged as well as mortified by the smallness of the congregation, began to overflow.

Such was the person who, without any emolument, had undertaken the charge of superintending, in occasional visits, the college at Trevecca, and who withdrew from that charge when Lady Huntingdon called upon all persons in that seminary to disavow the doctrines of Mr. Wesley or leave the place.

On the part of the Calvinists, the most conspicuous writers were the brothers Richard (afterwards Sir Richard) and Rowland Hill, and Augustus Montague Toplady, vicar of Broad Hembury in Devonshire. Never were any writings more thoroughly saturated with the essential acid of Calvinism than those of the predestinarian champions. It would scarcely be credible that three persons, of good birth and education, and of unquestionable goodness and piety, should have carried on controversy in so vile a manner, and with so detestable a

spirit;—if the hatred of theologians had not, unhappily become proverbial. Berridge of Everton also, who was buffoon as well as fanatic, engaged on their side; and even Harvey's nature was so far soured by his opinions, that he wrote in an acrimonious style against Mr. Wesley, whose real piety he knew, and whom he had once regarded as his spiritual father.

The ever-memorable Toplady, as his admirers call him, and who, they say, "stands paramount in the plenitude of dignity above most of his contemporaries," was bred at Westminster, and, according to his own account, converted at the age of sixteen, by the sermon of an ignorant lay preacher, in a barn in Ireland. He was an injudicious man, hasty in forming conclusions, and intemperate in advancing them: but his intellect was quick and lively, and his manner of writing, though coarse, was always vigorous, and sometimes fortunate. A little before the Conference which brought out the whole Calvinistic force against Wesley, Mr. Toplady published a Treatise upon absolute Predestination, chiefly translated from the Latin of Zanchius. Mr. Wesley set forth an analysis of this treatise, for the purpose of exposing its monstrous doctrine, and concluded in these words: "The sum of all this:—One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, believe this, or be damned. Witness my hand, A—— T——." Toplady denied the consequences, and accused Mr. Wesley of intending to palm the paragraph on the world as his. "In almost any other case," said he, "a similar forgery would transmit the criminal to Virginia or Maryland, if not to Tyburn. The satanic

guilt of the person who could excogitate and publish to the world a position like that, baffles all power of description, and is only to be exceeded (if exceedable) by the satanic shamelessness which dares to lay the black position at the door of other men."

Most certainly Mr. Wesley had no intention that this passage should pass for Mr. Toplady's writing. He gave it as the sum of his doctrine; and, stripping that doctrine of all disguise, exposed it thus in its naked monstrosity.

Toplady said of Mr. Fletcher's works, that, in the very few pages which he had perused, the serious passages were dulness double-condensed, and the lighter passages impudence double-distilled: "so hardened was" his own "front," to use one of his own expressions, "and so thoroughly was he drenched in the petrifying water of a party." If ever true Christian charity was manifested in polemical writing, it was by Fletcher of Madeley. Even theological controversy never in the slightest degree irritated his heavenly temper.

When Mr. Fletcher offended his antagonists, it was not by any personalities, or the slightest breathing of a malicious spirit, but by the ironical manner in which he displayed the real nature of their monstrous doctrine. For his talents were of the quick mercurial kind; his fancy was always active, and he might have held no inconsiderable rank, both as a humorous and as an impassioned writer, if he had not confined himself wholly to devotional subjects. But his happy illustrations had the effect of provoking his opponents. Mr. Wesley also, by the unanswerable manner in which he treated the Calvinistic question, drew upon himself the fierce resentment of a host of enemies. They were

confounded; but they would not be convinced; and they assailed him with a degree of rancorous hatred, which even in theological controversy has never been exceeded.

The unforgivable offence which drew upon Wesley and his doctrine this obloquy, was the sermon upon Free Grace, that had been the occasion of the breach with Whitefield. It is one of the most able and eloquent of all his discourses; a triumphant specimen of impassioned argument.

It exasperated beyond measure those who, in their own conceit, had taken out their patent of election, and considered themselves, in Mr. Toplady's language, (himself one of the number) as "kings *incog.*, travelling, disguised like pilgrims, to their dominions above." Even temperate Calvinists were shocked, and have said, that Mr. Wesley's "horrid appeal to all the devils in hell gave a sort of infernal tone to the controversy." It is, indeed, in a tremendous strain of eloquence, and shows with what indignation the preacher, in his zeal for God, and in his love for his fellow-creatures, regarded a doctrine so injurious to both.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WESLEY'S CLERICAL COADJUTORS.—MR. GRIMSHAW.—DR. COKE.—THE GREEK BISHOP.—WESLEY'S CREDULITY.

A FEW years before this final and irreparable breach with the Calvinists, Wesley had attempted to form an open and active union between all such clergymen as have more recently arrogated to themselves the ap-

pellation of evangelical, or gospel ministers. With this hope he sent round a circular letter, to some fifty ministers of the Church of England, wherein he proposed that, leaving free disputable points of predestination on one side, and perfection on the other; laying no stress upon expressions, and binding themselves to no peculiar discipline; but some remaining quite regular, others quite irregular; and others, again, partly the one and partly the other,—they should think and speak kindly of each other, form as it were a defensive league, and each help the other on in his work, and enlarge his influence by all rightful means. If anything more were meant by this than that each should occasionally accommodate the others with his pulpit, and that they should countenance his itinerant lay preachers, the meaning is not obvious.

The greater part of the methodising clergy adhered to Lady Huntingdon's party in the dispute. Among those who remained attached to Mr. Wesley, Vincent Perronet, the vicar of Shoreham, was one, who was, either by birth or extraction, a Swiss, and who, in the Romish Church, would have been beatified or canonised, for what, in mystical language, would be called his *rapts*, as well as for the uniform piety of his life. WILLIAM GRIMSHAW, who held the perpetual curacy of Haworth, in one of the wildest parts of the West Riding, was a more active associate. In his unconverted state, this person was certainly insane, and, had he given utterance at that time to the monstrous and horrible imaginations which he afterwards revealed to his spiritual friends, he would deservedly have been sent to Bedlam. His change of mind, which was not till he had been ten years in holy orders,

was preceded by what he supposed to be a miraculous impression upon his senses, and which may possibly have been an electrical or galvanic effect; and in the course of his ministry, he was favoured with a vision in a trance; that is to say, he mistook delirium for reality. He became, however, a very zealous parish priest; and his oddities, which procured him the name of Mad Grimshaw, did not prevent him from being very useful among a set of parishioners who are said to have been as wild as the bleak barren country which they inhabited, and to have had little more sense of religion than their cattle.

Grimshaw entered entirely into Mr. Wesley's views, acted as assistant in the circuit wherein he resided, and attended the Conference every third year, when it was held at Leeds. When Whitefield or Wesley came to visit him, a scaffold was erected for them in the churchyard, the church not being large enough to hold the concourse that assembled. Prayers, therefore, were read in the church, the preaching was in the open air, and the sacrament was afterwards administered to successive congregations, one church-full after another.

Of the few clergymen who entered into Mr. Wesley's views, and heartily co-operated with him, Mr. Grimshaw was the most eccentric; Mr. Fletcher the most remarkable for intellectual powers: the one who entered most entirely into the affairs of the Society was THOMAS COKE. This person, who held so distinguished a place among the Methodists, and by whose unwearied zeal, and indefatigable exertions, that spirit which Mr. Wesley had kindled in England was extended to the remotest parts of the world, was born at Brecknock, in the year 1747, the only child of respectable and wealthy parents. The

father died during his childhood, and the youth, in his seventeenth year, was entered as a gentleman commoner at Jesus College, Oxford. He escaped from the university with fewer vices than in those days were generally contracted there; but he brought away a taint of that philosophistical infidelity which was then beginning to infect half-learned men. The works of Bishop Sherlock reclaimed him: he entered into holy orders, and being in expectation of some considerable preferment, took out his degree of doctor of laws. The disappointment which he experienced from certain persons in power, to whom he had looked as patrons, was of little consequence to him, being possessed of a fair patrimony. He accepted the curacy of South Petherton, in Somersetshire, and entered upon the duties of his office with more than ordinary zeal. His preaching soon filled the church: more room was wanting for the congregation; and as the vestry would not be persuaded to erect a gallery, he built one at his own expense. This, and the style of his discourses, raised a suspicion that he was inclined to Methodism. The growing inclination was strengthened by conversation with Maxfield, who happened then to be residing in the neighbourhood, and confirmed by the perusal of Alleine's Alarum to the Unconverted. He now preached extemporaneously, established evening lectures, and introduced hymns into the Church; but, by thus going on faster than the parishioners were prepared to follow, he excited a strong spirit of opposition; complaints against him were preferred to the bishop, and to the rector: the former merely admonished him; by the latter he was dismissed, in a manner which seems to have been studiously disrespectful, before the people publicly, on the Sabbath day: and his enemies had the

indecency to chime him out of the church. These insults roused his Welsh blood; and he determined, with more spirit than prudence, to take his stand near the church on the two following Sundays, and preach to the people when they came out, for the purpose of vindicating himself, gratifying his adherents, and exhorting his opponents to repentance. He now took the earliest opportunity of being introduced to Wesley. The latter soon came into Somersetshire in his rounds, and thus notices the meeting in his Journal: "Here I found a clergyman, Dr. Coke, late a gentleman commoner of Jesus College in Oxford, who came twenty miles on purpose to meet me. I had much conversation with him; and an union then began, which I trust shall never end."

This was in the year 1776. Dr. Coke immediately became a member of the Methodist Society, and was soon regarded as the most efficient of all Mr. Wesley's fellow-labourers. Having wholly given himself up to the Connection, the second place in it was naturally assigned to him. No other of its active members was possessed of equal fortune and rank in society; and all that he had, his fortune, to every shilling, and his life, to every minute that could be employed in active exertions, were devoted to its interests. He was now considered as Mr. Wesley's more immediate representative; and, instead of being stationed, like the other preachers, in a circuit, he travelled, like Mr. Wesley, as a general inspector, wherever his presence was thought needful. In Ireland, more particularly, he visited the Societies alternately with Mr. Wesley, so that an annual visitation was always made. Before Mr. Wesley became acquainted with Dr. Coke, Mr. Fletcher had been

looked to as the fittest person to act as his coadjutor, and succeed to as much of his authority as could be deputed to any successor. But Mr. Fletcher shrank from the invidious distinction, and from the difficulties of the task: he had found his place, and knew where he could be most usefully employed for others, and most happily for himself.

The want of clerical assistants had been severely felt by Wesley. Notwithstanding his attachment to the Church of England, and his desire not only to continue in union with it himself, but to preserve his people from forming a schism, the tendency to separation became every year more apparent, from various causes, of which some were incidental; but others arose inevitably from the system which he had established. A hostile feeling toward the Church was retained by the dissenters who united themselves to the Methodists: these proselytes were not numerous, but they leavened the Society. It is likely too, that, as Methodism began to assume consistency and importance, just at the time when the Non-jurors were on the point of dissolution, a considerable proportion of that party would rather ally themselves with it, than with the sectarians or the Establishment; and these persons also would bring with them an unfavourable disposition toward the Church. But the main cause is obviously to be found in the growing influence of the lay preachers, their jealousy of the few clergymen who acted with them, their natural desire of placing themselves upon a level with the ministers of other denominations, and the disrespect with which the Establishment began to be regarded by most of those persons who preferred the preaching at the Chapel to that in the Church. And though Wesley often and

earnestly warned them against this, neither his language nor his conduct were at all times consistent. In controversy, and in self-defence, he was sometimes led to speak of the unworthy ministers of the Establishment in terms of indignation, not considering that his remarks would be generally applied by many of his followers.

The growing desire of the itinerants to raise themselves in rank, and of the Societies to have the sacrament administered by their own preachers, induced Wesley, who, in the continual bustle of his life, sometimes acted without due consideration, to take the strange means of obtaining orders for some of his lay assistants from a Greek, who called himself ERASMUS, and appeared in London with the title of Bishop of Arcadia. This measure was, in every point of view, injudicious. Charles was decidedly hostile to it, and would never allow the preachers who had been thus ordained to assist him at the communion table. Staniforth was one; and he found it so invidious among his colleagues, that he never thought proper to exercise the ministerial functions. On the other hand, some, both of the local and itinerant preachers, coveted the distinction, and prevailed upon the obliging bishop to lay his hands upon them, without Mr. Wesley's consent. Displeased at this disregard of his authority, he acted with his wonted decision, and at once excluded from the Connection those who would not forego the powers with which they supposed themselves to be invested. It was doubtful whether this Erasmus was what he pretended to be; and the whole transaction gave Wesley's enemies an opportunity of attacking him, which they did not fail to use. They charged him with having violated the oath of supremacy, by thus inducing a foreign prelate to exercise acts of

ecclesiastical jurisdiction within this realm; and they alleged that he had even pressed the Greek to consecrate him a bishop also, that he might then ordain what ministers he pleased. Erasmus was said to have refused, because, according to the canons of the Greek Church, more than one bishop must be present to assist at the consecration of a new one. Charles Wesley was even accused, in the Gospel Magazine, of having offered the Greek forty guineas, if he would perform the ceremony. This is palpably false: nothing can be so incredible as that Charles Wesley would have made such an offer, except that a bishop of Arcadia in London should have refused it. The charge of simony is, beyond all doubt, purely calumnious—in the spirit of that slander which the Gospel Magazine breathed in all its numbers. But there seems reason to believe that Wesley was willing to have been episcopised upon this occasion.

CHAPTER XXVII.

METHODISM IN AMERICA.—WESLEY'S POLITICAL CONDUCT.

A LITTLE modification might have rendered Methodism a most useful auxiliary to the English Church. But if some such auxiliary power was needed in this country, much more was it necessary in British America, where the scattered state of the population was as little favourable to the interests of religion as of government.

In the New-England States, the Puritans had established a dismal tyranny of the priesthood: time and circumstances had mitigated it; and ecclesiastical discipline in those provinces seems nearly to have reached

its desirable mean about the middle of the eighteenth century: the elders no longer exercised an impertinent and vexatious control over their countrymen: they retained, however, a wholesome influence; the means of religious instruction were carefully provided, and the people were well trained up in regular and pious habits. Too little attention had been paid to this point in the other States: indeed it may be said, that the mother country, in this respect, had grossly neglected one of its first and most important duties towards the colonies. There were many parts in the Southern States, of which the frightful picture given of them by Secker, when Bishop of Oxford, was not overcharged. "The first European inhabitants," said that prelate, "too many of them carried but little sense of Christianity abroad with them. A great part of the rest suffered it to wear out gradually, and their children grew, of course, to have yet less than they, till, in some countries, there were scarce any footsteps of it left beyond the mere name. No teacher was known, no religious assembly was held; the sacrament of baptism not administered for near twenty years together, nor that of the Lord's Supper for near sixty, amongst many thousands of people, who did not deny the obligation of these duties, but lived, nevertheless, in a stupid neglect of them." To remedy this, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sent out missionaries from time to time; but, misdirecting their exertions, for want of proper inquiry, or proper information, they employed most of the few labourers whom they could find in the States where they were least wanted, and in places where they did little more than interfere with what was the established system.

Whitefield had contented himself with the immediate

impression which he produced. The person who first began to organise Methodism in America was an Irishman, by name Philip Embury, who had been a local preacher in his own country. Having removed to New York, he collected a few hearers, first in his own house, and when their number increased, in a large room, which they rented for the purpose. Captain Webb happened at this time to be in America. This officer, who had lost an eye in the battle of Quebec, had been converted, not long after that event, by Mr. Wesley's preaching at Bristol, and had tried his own talents as a preacher at Bath, when some accident prevented the itinerant from arriving whom the congregation had assembled to hear. Webb, hearing of Embury's beginning, paid him a visit from Albany, where he then held the appointment of barrack-master, preached in his uniform, attracted auditors by the novelty of such an exhibition, and made proselytes by his zeal. A regular society was formed in the year 1768, and they resolved to build a preaching-house.

Wesley's attention had already been invited to America. He met with a Swedish chaplain, who had spent several years in Pennsylvania, and who entreated that he would send out preachers to help him, representing what multitudes in that country were as sheep without a shepherd. In 1771, he says, "My call to America is not yet clear. I have no business there, as long as they can do without me: at present I am a debtor to the people of England and Ireland, and especially to them that believe." That year, therefore, he sent over Richard Wright and Francis Asbury, the latter of whom proved not inferior to himself in zeal, activity, and perseverance. Asbury perceived that his ministry was

more needed in the villages and scattered plantations than in large towns; and he therefore devoted himself to country service. In 1773, Thomas Rankin and George Shadford were sent to assist their brethren: by this time they had raised a few recruits among the Americans; and holding a Conference at Philadelphia, it appeared, by their muster-rolls, that there were about a thousand members in the different societies.

These preachers produced a considerable effect; and Methodism would have increased even more rapidly than in England, if its progress had not been interrupted by the rebellion. At the commencement of the disputes which led to that unhappy and ill-managed contest, Mr. Wesley was disposed to doubt whether the measures of government were defensible: but when the conduct of the revolutionists became more violent, and their intentions were unmasked, he saw good cause for altering his opinion, and published "A Calm Address to the Americans," examining the question, whether the English Parliament had power to tax the colonies. In this little pamphlet he pursued the same chain of reasoning as Dr. Johnson had done, and maintained that the supreme power in England had a legal right of laying any tax upon them, for any end beneficial to the whole empire.

Forty thousand copies of the Calm Address were printed in three weeks: it was written before the war had actually begun; and excited so much anger among the English friends of the American cause, that, as he said, they would willingly have burnt him and it together. But though Wesley maintained that, when the principles of order and legitimate government were seditiously attacked, it was the duty of every Christian minister to

exert himself in opposing the evil spirit of the times, he saw how imprudent it would be for his preachers in America to engage in political matters.

But the part which Wesley had taken could not be kept secret: the Methodists, in consequence, became objects of suspicion, and the personal safety of the preachers was oftentimes endangered. Tarring and feathering was not the only cruelty to which they were exposed in those days of brutal violence. The English missionaries were at length glad to escape as they could; Asbury alone remained: he was less obnoxious than his colleagues, because, having chosen the less frequented parts of the country for the scene of his exertions, he had been less conspicuous, and less exposed to provocation and to danger. Yet even he found it necessary to withdraw from public view, and conceal himself in the house of a friend, till, after two years of this confinement, he obtained credentials from the governor of Pennsylvania, which enabled him to appear abroad again with safety.

The Society, as the war continued, was in danger of being broken up by a curious species of intolerance, which could not have been foreseen. The prevailing religion in the Southern States had been that of the Church of England; but the clergy were driven away during the troubles; the whole of the Church property was confiscated; and, when affairs were settled, none of it was restored, and no attempt made, either by the general or provincial governments, to substitute any kind of religious instruction in place of the Establishment, which had been destroyed! The Methodists had hitherto been members of the English Church; but upon the compulsory emigration of the clergy, they found them-

selves deprived of the sacraments and could obtain no baptism for their children; for neither the Presbyterians, the Independents, nor Baptists would administer these ordinances to them, unless they would renounce their connection with Mr. Wesley, and join with their respective sects.

Before the dispute between the mother country and the colonies assumed a serious character, and before any apprehension of separation was entertained on the one side, or any intention to that effect was avowed on the other, the heads of the Church in England had represented to government, how greatly it would conduce to the interest of religion in America, if a bishop were appointed there. This judicious representation was unsuccessful; for the ministers, who were but too bold in trying experiments of another kind with the colonists, thought it better to let religious affairs remain as they were, than to introduce any innovation. If this had been done half a century earlier, as soon as the population of the country required it, it would have been highly beneficial to America; part of the hierarchy would have submitted to, or taken part in the revolution, and thus a religious establishment might have been preserved in those parts of the United States where the want of religious instruction is severely felt. The ill consequences of an omission, which, whether morally or politically considered, is equally to be condemned, were now experienced. Two American youths, after the peace, came to England, for the purpose of obtaining episcopal ordination: but the Archbishop of Canterbury was of opinion, that no English bishop could ordain them, unless they took the oath of allegiance, which it was impossible for them to do. They then applied for

advice and assistance to Dr. Franklin, who was at that time in France. Upon consulting a French clergyman, he found that they could not be ordained in France, unless they vowed obedience to the Archbishop of Paris.

The advice, therefore, which they received from a man like Franklin may easily be conjectured;—it was, that the Episcopalian clergy in America should become Presbyterians; or, if they would not consent to this, that they should elect a bishop for themselves.

This latter course some of the American Methodists had already adopted. Finding themselves deprived of communion, and their children of baptism, they applied to Asbury, whom they regarded as their head, to adopt some means of providing for these ordinances. Asbury knew not how to act, and advised them to wait till circumstances should prepare the way for what they wished. It was not likely that they should follow this advice. Breaking off their connection with him, and thereby with Mr. Wesley, they elected three of their elder brethren to ordain others by imposition of hands. Asbury, however, retained so much influence, that, at a subsequent conference, this ordination was declared to be unscriptural. The schism was healed just as the peace was made; and, as soon as a communication was opened with England, he sent a representation of the case to Wesley. Mr. Wesley had been convinced, by the perusal of Lord King's Account of the Primitive Church, that bishops and presbyters are the same order. Men are sometimes easily convinced of what they find it convenient or agreeable to believe. Regarding the apostolical succession as a fable, he thought, when this application from America arrived, that the best thing which he could

do, would be to secure the Wesleyan succession for the United States.

This step, however, was not taken without some demur, and a feeling that it required some justification to himself, as well as to the world. It appears that some of his friends advised an application to the bishops, requesting them to ordain preachers for America. Wesley was not aware of the legal impediment to this: but he replied, that, on a former application to the Bishop of London, his request had been unsuccessful; that if the bishops would consent, their proceedings were notoriously slow, and this matter admitted of no delay. "If they would ordain them now," he continued, "they would expect to govern them; and how grievously would this entangle us! As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the state and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church; and we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free." Having, therefore, determined how to act, he communicated his determination to Dr. Coke, and proposed, in his character of presbyter, which, he said, was the same as bishop, to invest him with the same presbytero-episcopal powers, that, in that character, he might proceed to America, and superintend the societies in the United States. The doubts which Dr. Coke entertained as to the validity of Mr. Wesley's authority, were removed by the same treatise which had convinced Mr. Wesley; and it seems not to have occurred to either the one or the other, that, if presbyter and the bishop were the same order, the proposed consecration was useless; for

Dr. Coke, having been regularly ordained, was as good a bishop as Mr. Wesley himself.

Having, however, taken his part, he stated the reasons upon which he had acted, with his wonted perspicuity. Then asserting his opinion, that bishops and presbyters were the same order, and consequently had the same right to ordain, he said that for many years he had been importuned from time to time to exercise this right, by ordaining part of the travelling preachers, and that he had still refused, for peace' sake, and because he was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the National Church, to which he belonged. "But the case," he pursued, "is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops, who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers; so that, for some hundreds of miles together, there is none either to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end: and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest."

Accordingly, he summoned Dr. Coke to Bristol, and Mr. Creighton with him, a clergyman who had become a regular member of the Methodist Connection. With their assistance he ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey presbyters for America; and afterwards he ordained Dr. Coke superintendent. Some reason might have been expected why he thought this second ordination necessary, superintendent being but another word for bishop; and why he thus practically contradicted the very principle upon which he professed to act. Not stopping to discuss such niceties, he gave the

Doctor letters of ordination, under his hand and seal, in these words: "To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, Presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting: Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the usage of the same Church; and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers,—Know all men, that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called, at this time, to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to His glory, I have this day set apart, as a Superintendent, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, a Presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work: and I do hereby recommend him, to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ.—In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and eighty-four. JOHN WESLEY."

Wesley had long deceived himself respecting the part which he was acting toward the Church of England. At the outset of his career he had no intention of setting himself up in opposition to it; and when, in his progress towards schism, he disregarded its forms, and set its discipline at nought, he still repeatedly disclaimed all

views of separation. Nor did he ever avow the wish, or refer to it as a likely event, with complacency, even when he must have perceived that the course of his conduct, and the temper of his followers, rendered it inevitable. On this occasion his actions spoke for him: by arrogating the episcopal authority, he took the only step which was wanting to form the Methodists into a distinct body of separatists from the Church. Nevertheless, this was not done without reluctance, arising from old and rooted feelings; nor without some degree of shame, perhaps, for the inconsistencies in which he had involved himself.

Charles Wesley disapproved his brother's conduct on this occasion, as an unwarrantable assumption of authority, and as inconsistent with his professed adherence to the Church of England. His approbation could never be indifferent to John, whose fortunes he had during so many years faithfully shared, for honour and for dishonour, for better, for worse. But Dr. Coke had now succeeded to the place in Methodism from which Charles had retired; and in him Mr. Wesley found that willing and implicit obedience which is the first qualification that the founders of a sect, an order, or a religion, require from their immediate disciples. The new superintendent, with his companions, sailed from Bristol for New York. Among the books which he read on the voyage, was the Life of St. Francis Xavier. Through all the exaggerations and fables with which that life is larded, Coke perceived the spirit of the man, and exclaimed with kindred feeling, "Oh for a soul like his! But, glory be to God, there is nothing impossible with Him. I seem to want the wings of an eagle, and the voice of a trumpet, that I may proclaim the gospel

through the east and the west, and the north and the south."

Asbury was not at New York when they arrived. Dr. Coke explained the plan which had been arranged in England, to the travelling preachers who were stationed in that city, and had the satisfaction of hearing, not only that such a plan would be highly approved by all the preachers, but of being desired to make it public at once; "because Mr. Wesley had determined the point; and therefore it was not to be investigated, but complied with." This, however, was not done, because it would have been disrespectful to Mr. Asbury, with whom he was instructed to consult, and act in concert. On his way southward, to meet him, Dr. Coke found that Methodism was in good odour in America. He was introduced to the governor of Pennsylvania; and, at an inn in the State of Delaware, the landlady, though not a Methodist herself, entertained him and his companion sumptuously, and would not receive their money; esteeming it an honour to have harboured such guests. When he had finished preaching one day, at a chapel in the State, in the midst of the woods, to a large congregation, a plain robust man came up to him in the pulpit, and kissed him, pronouncing, at the same time, a primitive salutation. This person, as he readily supposed, proved to be his colleague. Dr. Coke was prepared to esteem him, and a personal acquaintance confirmed this opinion. "I exceedingly reverence Mr. Asbury," he says, "he has so much wisdom and consideration, so much meekness and love, and, under all this, though hardly to be perceived, so much command and authority.

Asbury, expecting to meet Dr. Coke in this part

of the country, had collected as many preachers as he could, to hold a council. They agreed to convoke a Conference of all the preachers at Baltimore, on Christmas eve, and Freeborn Garretson was sent off on this errand, "like an arrow, from north to south," with directions to send messengers to the right and left. This was in the middle of November; and, that Coke might not be idle in the meantime, Asbury drew up for him a route of about a thousand miles, borrowed a good horse, and gave him, for a guide and assistant, his black, Harry, of whom the Doctor says, "I really believe he is one of the best preachers in the world, there is such an amazing power attends his preaching, though he cannot read; and he is one of the humblest creatures I ever saw." Of eighty-one American preachers, sixty assembled at the Conference, and, at their meeting, the form of church government, and the manner of worship for the Methodists in America, which Mr. Wesley had arranged, was accepted and established. The name of Superintendent, and the notion that bishops and presbyters were the same order, were now laid aside; they were mere pretexts, and had served the purpose for which they were intended. Methodism was constituted in America as an Episcopal Church. The clergy were to consist of three orders,—bishops, elders, and deacons. The deacons were to be ordained by a bishop, after a probation similar to that of the travelling preachers in England. The elders were of two orders; the presiding elders were to be unanimously elected by the General Conference; they were to be assistants to the bishops, to represent them in their absence, and to act under their direction. The travelling elders were to administer the ordinances, and to perform the office

of marrying: they were to be elected by a majority of the Annual Conference, and ordained by a bishop and the elders present, by imposition of hands. A deacon might not be chosen elder, till he had officiated two years in his inferior degree. A bishop was to be elected by the General Conference, and consecrated by two or three bishops: but in case the whole order should be extinct, the ceremony might then be performed by three elders. The business of the bishop was, to preside in the Conferences, station the preachers, admit or suspend them during the interval of the Conferences, travel through the Connection at large, and inspect the concerns, temporal and spiritual, of the Societies. Besides the General Conference, in which the supreme authority was lodged, and which had power of suspending, judging, and expelling the bishops, as well as electing them, there were to be six yearly Conferences,—the extent of the country rendered this necessary. The circuits, during the time of the Conference, were to be supplied by local preachers, engaged for the purpose, and paid in the same proportion and manner as the travelling preachers for whom they acted. A local preacher was not eligible to the office of deacon till after four years' probation; nor might he preach till he had obtained a certificate of approbation from his quarterly meeting. The discipline differed little from that of the English Methodists; the ritual more. In condescension to the puritanic notions which might be expected among the old Americans, the sacrament might be administered to communicants sitting or standing, if they objected to kneel; and baptism might be performed either by sprinkling, affusion, or immersion, at the option of the parents, or, in adult cases, of the person.

At this Conference, in pursuance of Mr. Wesley's instructions, and by virtue of the authority derived from him, Dr. Coke consecrated Mr. Asbury bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. In the name of that Church, an address to General Washington was drawn up, congratulating him on his appointment to the office of president, and professing the loyalty of the members, and their readiness, on all lawful occasions, to support the government then established. This was signed by Coke and Asbury, as heads of the Connection: the former, upon this occasion, in his capacity of American bishop, performing an act inconsistent with his allegiance as a British subject. It exposed him to some severe animadversion in England, and to a semblance of displeasure from Mr. Wesley, which was merely intended to save appearances.

It appears that the spirit of riotous devotion, which afterwards produced the fanatical extravagances of the camp-meetings, began to manifest itself in the early days of American Methodism, and that it was encouraged by the superiors, when it might have been repressed.

Plainly as it had been shown among the Methodists themselves, that emotions of this kind were like a fire of straw, soon kindled and soon spent, the disposition, whenever it manifested itself, was encouraged rather than checked; so strong is the tendency towards enthusiasm. But if Dr. Coke, with the advantages of education, rank in life, and of the lessons which he derived from Mr. Wesley, when age and long experience had cooled him, could be so led away by sympathy as to give his sanction to these proceedings, it might be expected that preachers who had grown up in a state of semi-civilisation, and

were in the first effervescence of their devotional feelings, would go beyond all bounds in their zeal.

Itinerants in America were liable to discomforts and dangers which are unknown in England. There were perilous swamps to cross; rivers to ford; the risk of going astray in the wilderness; and the plague of ticks in the forests, which are so great a torment, that Dr. Coke was almost laid up by their bites. To these difficulties, and to the inconveniences of sometimes sleeping on the floor, sometimes three in a bed, and sometimes bivouacking in the woods, the native preachers were less sensible than those who came from Europe; but a great proportion of the itinerants settled when they became fathers of families.

But though the American itinerants withdrew from their labours earlier than their brethren in the mother country, new adventurers were continually offering themselves to supply their place, and the increase of Methodism was far more rapid than in England. In the year 1786, two-and-twenty chapels were built in a single circuit within the State of South Carolina, and the Society in that same year had added to its numbers in the United States more than 6600 members. In 1789, when the census of the Methodists in Great Britain amounted to 70,305, that in America was 43,265. In less than twenty years afterwards they doubled their numbers at home; but the Americans had then become the more numerous body, and their comparative increase was much greater than this statement would imply, because it was made upon a much smaller population.

[Chapter XXVIII., "Methodism in the West Indies," is omitted.]

CHAPTER XXIX.

SETTLEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE.—MANNERS AND EFFECTS OF METHODISM.

THE year 1784 has been called the grand climacterical year of Methodism, because Wesley then first arrogated to himself an episcopal power; and because in that year the legal settlement of the Conference was effected, whereby provision was made for the government of the Society after his death, as long as it should continue.

The Methodist chapels, with the preachers' houses annexed to them, had all been conveyed to trustees for the use of such persons as should be appointed from time to time by John or Charles Wesley, during their lives; by the survivor, and after the death of both, by the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds. A legal opinion was taken, whether the law would recognise the Conference, unless the precise meaning of the word were defined: the lawyers were of opinion that it would not; and therefore, at the next meeting of that body, Mr. Wesley was unanimously desired to draw up a deed which should give a legal specification of the term; the mode of doing it being left entirely to his discretion. The necessity for this was obvious. "Without some authentic deed fixing the meaning of the term, the moment I died, says he, the Conference had been nothing: therefore any of the proprietors of land on which our preaching-houses had been built might have seized them for their own use, and there would have been none to hinder

them; for the Conference would have been nobody—a mere empty name."

His first thought was to name some ten or twelve persons. On further consideration, he appointed one hundred, believing, he says, "there would be more safety in a greater number of counsellors"; and judging these were as many as could meet without too great an expense, and without leaving any circuit deprived of preachers while the Conference was assembled. The hundred persons thus nominated, "being preachers and expounders of God's holy Word, under the care of, and in connection with, the said John Wesley," were declared to constitute the Conference, according to the true intent and meaning of the various deeds in which that term was used; and provision was now made for continuing the succession and identity of this body, wherein the administration of the Methodist Connection was to be vested after the founder's death. They were to assemble yearly at London, Bristol, or Leeds, or any other place which they might think proper to appoint; and their first act was to be to fill up all vacancies occasioned by death or other circumstances. No act was to be valid unless forty members were present, provided the whole body had not been reduced below that number by death or other causes. The duration of the assembly should not be less than five days, nor more than three weeks, but any time between those limits at their discretion. They were to elect a president and secretary from their own number, and the president should have a double vote. Any member absenting himself without leave from two successive conferences, and not appearing on the first day of the third, forfeited his seat by that absence. They had power to admit preachers and expounders upon trial,

to receive them into full connection, and to expel any person for sufficient cause; but no person might be elected a member of their body till he had been twelve months in full connection as a preacher. They might not appoint any one to preach in any of their chapels who was not a member of the Connection, nor might they appoint any preacher for more than three years to one place, except ordained ministers of the Church of England. They might delegate any member or members of their own body to act with full power in Ireland, or any other parts out of the kingdom of Great Britain. Whenever the Conference should be reduced below the number of forty members, and continue so reduced for three years, or whenever it should neglect to meet for three successive years, in either of such cases the Conference should be extinguished; and the chapels and other premises should vest in the trustees for the time being, in trust that they should appoint persons to preach therein. The deed concluded with a provision that nothing which it contained should be construed so as to extinguish, lessen, or abridge the life estate of John and Charles Wesley in any of the chapels and premises.

Wesley prided himself upon the economy of his Society, and upon his management of it. It was the peculiar talent, he said, which God had given him. He possessed that talent, beyond all doubt, in a remarkable degree. The constitution of Methodism, like most forms of government, had arisen out of accidents and circumstances: but Wesley had availed himself of these with great skill, and made them subservient to his views and purposes as they arose: whatever power of mind was displayed in the formation of Methodism was his own. In this respect he

differs from those monastic patriarchs with whom he may most obviously be compared. St. Benedict compiled his rule from elder statutes, modifying them, and adapting them to his own time and country. St. Francis seems to have become the tool of his artful and ambitious disciples; and Loyola was not the architect of the admirable structure which he founded. But the system of Methodism was Wesley's own work. The task of directing it was not so difficult as might at first appear. His rank, his attainments, his abilities, and his reputation, secured for him so decided a superiority, that no person in his own community could, with the slightest prospect of success, dispute it: and in the latter years of his life, that superiority was still farther increased by his venerable age, and the respect which he had then obtained even among strangers. Those who were weary of acting under his direction as preachers, or of observing his rules as members, either withdrew, or were easily dismissed. This is the great advantage which all sects enjoy. They get rid of troublesome spirits and bad subjects; and general society is ready to receive the outcasts.

The quarterly renewal of the band and class tickets afforded a ready means of ejecting unworthy and disobedient members. The terms of admission, therefore, might well be made comprehensive; while these means of cutting short all discordance were in the preacher's hands. Upon this facility of admission Wesley prided himself. "One circumstance," says he, "is quite peculiar to the Methodists: the terms upon which any person may be admitted into their society. They do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatever. Let them hold

particular or general redemption, absolute or conditional decrees; let them be Churchmen or Dissenters, Presbyterians or Independents, it is no obstacle. Let them choose one mode of worship or another, it is no bar to their admission. The Presbyterian may be a Presbyterian still; the Independent or Anabaptist use his own mode of worship; so may the Quaker, and none will contend with him about it. They think, and let think. One condition, and one only is required,—a real desire to save their souls. Where this is, it is enough; they desire no more. They lay stress upon nothing else. They ask only, Is thy heart herein as my heart? If it be, give me thy hand. Is there any other society in Great Britain or Ireland that is so remote from bigotry?—that is so truly of a Catholic spirit?—so ready to admit all serious persons without distinction? Where, then, is there such another society? In Europe? in the habitable world? I know none. Let any man show it me that can. Till then, let no one talk of the bigotry of the Methodists." The propriety of thus admitting persons of opposite persuasions, and of bearing with the opposition which they might raise, was once debated in Conference. Mr. Wesley listened patiently to the discussion, and concluded it by saying, "I have no more right to object to a man for holding a different opinion from me, than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig, and I wear my own hair; but if he takes his wig off, and begins to shake the powder about my eyes, I shall consider it my duty to get quit of him as soon as possible."

Wesley, indeed, well understood the importance of unanimity in his connection; and even before he had

taken those decided steps which prepared the way for a separation from the Church, aimed, in many of his regulations, at making the Methodists a peculiar people. For this reason, he required them, like the Quakers, to intermarry among themselves. This point was determined in the first Conference, the want of such a regulation having been experienced.

This was not the only point in which Wesley imitated the Quakers. He has himself said, that, having remarked among them several parts of Christian practice, he has willingly adopted, with some restrictions, plainness of speech and plainness of dress. In their barbarisms of language, and their superstitious rejection of common forms of speech, he was too well educated and too sensible to follow them; neither did he recommend his followers to imitate them in those little particularities of dress which could answer no end but that of distinguishing them from other people. "To be singular," he said, "merely for singularity's sake, is not the part of a Christian. I do not, therefore, advise you to wear a hat of such dimensions, or a coat of a particular form. Rather, in things that are absolutely indifferent, humility and courtesy require you to conform to the customs of your country; but I advise you to imitate them in the neatness and in the plainness of their apparel. In this are implied two things: that your apparel be cheap, far cheaper than others in your circumstances wear, or than you would wear if you knew not God; that it be grave, not gay, airy, or showy—not in the point of the fashion."

It was one of the band-rules, that rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace and ruffles were not to be worn; and this rule was ordered by the first Conference to be enforced, particularly with regard to ruffles: band-tickets were not

to be given to any persons who had not left them off; and no exempt case was to be allowed, not even of a married woman: "Better one suffer than many," was Mr. Wesley's language at that time. This injunction was afterwards withdrawn; because it was found impracticable, as interfering in a manner not to be borne with domestic affairs.

Women, therefore, who were constrained by "self-willed, unreasonable husbands or parents," to do in this respect what otherwise they would not, were held blameless, provided they used "all possible means, arguments, and entreaties to be excused," and complied just "so far as they were constrained, and no farther." Even in this concession, the intolerant spirit of a reformer is betrayed; and no scruple was made at introducing discord into private families, for the sake of an idle fancy which Wesley had taken up in the days of his enthusiasm. He maintained, that curling the hair, and wearing gold, precious stones, and costly apparel, were expressly forbidden in Scripture; and that whoever said there is no harm in these things, might as well say there is no harm in stealing or adultery; a mode of reasoning, which would produce no effect so surely as that of confounding all notions of right or wrong.

In spite, however, of his exhortations, those of his own people who could afford it, "the very people that sate under the pulpit, or by the side of it," were as fashionably adorned as others of their own rank. "This," said Wesley, "is a melancholy truth: I am ashamed of it; but I know not how to help it. Let me see, before I die, a Methodist congregation full as plain dressed as a Quaker congregation. Only be more consistent with yourselves: let your dress be *cheap* as well as plain,

otherwise you do but trifle with God, and me, and your own souls. I pray let there be no costly silks among you, how grave soever they may be: let there be no Quaker linen, proverbially so called for its exquisite fineness; no Brussels lace; no elephantine hats or bonnets—those scandals of female modesty. Be all of a piece, dressed from head to foot as persons professing godliness; professing to do every thing, small and great, with the single view of pleasing God."

Whitefield, in the early part of his course, had fallen into an error of this kind; and, for about a year, he says, thought that "Christianity required him to *go nasty*." But Wesley was always scrupulously neat in his person, and enforced upon his followers this necessity of personal neatness. Toward the end of his life, he publicly declared his regret that he had not made the Methodists distinguish themselves by a peculiar costume.

Upon his wealthier followers, his exhortations upon this subject produced little or no effect; but, in the middle and lower classes, of which the great majority consisted, the women took to a mode of dress less formal than that of the Quakers, but almost as plain, and by which they were easily distinguished. With the men he was less successful: it was asked, in the Conference of 1782, if it were well for the preachers to powder their hair, and to wear artificial curls? and the answer merely said, that "to abstain from both is the more excellent way." A direct prohibition was not thought advisable, because it would not have been willingly obeyed.

Cards, dancing, and the theatres were, of course, forbidden to his disciples. Not contented with such reasons as are valid or plausible for the prohibition,

they have collected superstitious anecdotes upon these subjects; and, in a spirit as presumptuous as it is uncharitable, have recorded tales of sudden death, as instances of God's judgment upon card-players and dancing-masters! Innocent was a word which Wesley would never suffer to be applied to any kind of pastime; for he had set his face against all diversions of any kind, and would not even allow the children at school to play. Wesley was in nothing more erroneous than in judging of others by himself, and requiring from them a constant attention to spiritual things, and that unremitting stretch of the faculties which to him was become habitual. If he never flagged, it was because he was blessed above all men with a continual elasticity of spirits; because the strong motive of ambition was always acting upon him; because perpetual change of place kept his mind and body for ever on the alert; and because, wherever he went, his presence excited a stir among strangers, and made a festival among his friends. Daily change of scene and of society, with a life of activity and exertion, kept him in hilarity as well as health. But it was unreasonable to expect that his followers should have the same happy temperament.

He advised his preachers not to converse with any person more than an hour at a time; in general to fix the end of every conversation before they began; to plan it beforehand; to pray before and after it, and to watch and pray during the time. In the same spirit of a monastic legislator also, but to a more practicable and useful end, he exhorted them to watch against what he called *the lust of finishing*; to mortify which, he and his companions at Oxford, he said, frequently broke off writing in the middle of a sentence,

if not in the middle of a word, especially the moment they heard the chapel bell ring. "If nature," said he, "reclaimed, we remembered the word of the heathen—*ejicienda est hæc mollities animi.*" Could his rules have been enforced like those of his kindred spirits in the days of papal dominion, he also would have had his followers regular as clock-work, and as obedient, as uniform, and as artificial as they could have been made by the institutions of the Chinese empire, or the monastery of La Trappe. This was not possible, because obedience was a matter of choice: his disciples conformed no farther than they thought good; dismissal was the only punishment which he could inflict, and it was always in their power to withdraw from the Connection. Even his establishment at Kingswood failed of the effect which he had expected from it, though authority was not wanting there; because the system was too rigorous and too monastic for the age and country. The plan of making it a general school for the society was relinquished; but it was continued for the sons of the preachers, and became one of those objects for which the Conference regularly provided at their annual meeting. In the year 1766 he delivered over the management of it to stewards on whom he could depend: "So I have cast," said he, "a heavy load off my shoulders; blessed be God for able and faithful men who will do His work without any temporal reward." The superintendence he still retained; and it was a frequent cause of vexation to him. Maids, masters, and boys, were refractory, sometimes the one, sometimes the other, sometimes all together, so that he talked of letting the burden drop. On one occasion, he says, "Having told my whole mind to the masters and servants, I

spoke to the children in a far stronger manner than ever I did before. I will kill or cure. I *will* have one or the other,—a Christian school, or none at all." But the necessity of such an asylum induced him to persevere in it; and it was evidently, with all the gross errors of its plan, and all the trouble and chagrin which it occasioned, a favourite institution with the founder.

Neither did Wesley ever discover the extreme danger of exciting an inflammatory state of devotional feeling. His system, on the contrary, enjoined a perpetual course of stimulants, and lest the watch-nights and the love-feasts, with the ordinary means of class-meetings and band-meetings, should be insufficient, he borrowed from the Puritans one of the most perilous practices that ever was devised by enthusiasm; the entering into a covenant, in which the devotee promises and vows to the "most dreadful God," (beginning the address with that dreadful appellation!) to become His covenant servant; and, giving up himself, body and soul, to His service, to observe all His laws, and obey Him before all others, "and this to the death!" Mr. Wesley may perhaps have been prejudiced in favour of this practice, because he found it recommended by the Nonconformist Richard Allein, whose works had been published by his maternal grandfather, Dr. Annesley; so that he had probably been taught to respect the author in his youth. In the year 1755, he first recommended this covenant; and, after explaining the subject to his London congregation during several successive days, he assembled as many as were willing to enter into the engagement, at the French Church in Spitalfields, and read to them the tremendous formula, to which eighteen hundred persons

signified their assent by standing up. "Such a night," he says, "I scarce ever saw before: surely the fruit of it shall remain for ever!" From that time it has been the practice among the Methodists to renew the covenant annually, generally on the first night of the new year, or of the Sunday following. They are exhorted to make it not only in heart, but in word; not only in word, but in writing; and to spread the writing with all possible reverence before the Lord, as if they would present it to Him as their act and deed, and then to set their hands to it. It is said, that some persons, from a fanatical and frightful notion of making the covenant perfect on their part, have signed it with their own blood!

The manner in which he insisted upon the necessity of the new birth, was especially dangerous: without this he affirmed that there could be no salvation. "To say that ye cannot be born again," said he, "that there is no new birth but in baptism, is to seal you all under damnation—to consign you to hell, without help, without hope. Thousands do really believe that they have found a *broad way which leadeth* not *to destruction.* 'What danger (say they) can a woman be in, that is so *harmless* and so *virtuous*? What fear is there that so *honest* a man, one of so strict *morality*, should miss of heaven? Especially if, over and above all this, they constantly attend on the Church and sacrament.' One of these will ask with all assurance, 'What! shall I not do as well as my neighbours?' Yes; as well as your unholy neighbours; as well as your neighbours that die in their sins; for you will all drop into the pit together, in the nethermost hell. You will all lie together in the lake of fire, 'the lake of fire burning

with brimstone.' Then at length you will see (but God grant you may see it before!) the necessity of holiness in order to glory, and, consequently, of the new birth; since none can be holy, except he be born again." And he inveighed bitterly against all who preached any doctrine short of this. "Where lies the uncharitableness," he asked; "on my side, or on yours? I say he may be born again, and so become an heir of salvation: you say he cannot be born again; and, if so, he must inevitably perish: so you utterly block up his way to salvation, and send him to hell, out of mere charity."—"They who do not teach men to walk in the narrow way,—who encourage the easy, careless, harmless, useless creature, the man who suffers no reproach for righteousness' sake, to imagine he is in the way to heaven; these are false prophets in the highest sense of the word; these are traitors both to God and man; these are no other than the first-born of Satan, and the eldest sons of Apollyon the destroyer. These are above the rank of ordinary cut-throats, for they murder the souls of men. They are continually peopling the realms of night; and, whenever they follow the poor souls whom they have destroyed, hell shall be moved from beneath to meet them at their coming."

The effect of these violent discourses was aided by the injudicious language concerning good works, into which Wesley was sometimes hurried, in opposition even to his own calmer judgment upon that contested point. "If you had done no harm to any man," said he, "if you had abstained from all wilful sin, if you had done all the good you possibly could to all men, and constantly attended all the ordinances of God, all this will not keep you from hell, except you be born

again." And he attempted to prove, by a syllogism, that no works done before justification are good, because they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done. "Wherewithal," said he, "shall a sinful man atone for any the least of his sins? With his own works? Were they ever so many or holy, they are not his own, but God's. But indeed they are all unholy and sinful themselves; so that every one of them needs a fresh atonement."—"If thou couldst do all things well; if from this very hour till death thou couldst perform perfect uninterrupted obedience, even this would not atone for what is past. Yea, the present and the future obedience of all the men upon earth, and all the angels in heaven, would never make satisfaction to the justice of God for one single sin." Wesley has censured the error of reposing in what he calls the unwieldy idea of God's mercy. Is such an idea of His justice more tenable? If such notions were well founded, wherein would the value of a good conscience consist?—or why should we have been taught and commanded, when we pray, to say,—"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

These were not Wesley's deliberate opinions. He held a saner doctrine, and the avowal of that doctrine was what drew upon him such loads of slanderous abuse from the Ultra-Calvinists. Yet he was led to these inconsistencies by the course of his preaching, and the desire of emptying men of their righteousness, as he called it. And if he were thus indiscreet, what was to be expected from his lay preachers, especially from those who were at the same time in the heat of their enthusiasm, and the plenitude of their ignorance? The overstrained feelings which were thus excited, and the

rigid doctrine which was preached, tended to produce two opposite extremes of evil. Many would become what, in puritanical language, is called backsliders, and still more would settle into all the hypocritical formalities of puritanism. "Despise not a profession of holiness," says Osborn, "because it may be true; but have a care how you trust it, for fear it should be false!"

In proportion as Methodism obtained ground among the educated classes, its direct effects were evil. It narrowed their views and feelings; burdened them with forms; restricted them from recreations which keep the mind in health; discouraged, if it did not absolutely prohibit, accomplishments that give a grace to life; separated them from general society; substituted a sectarian in the place of a catholic spirit; and, by alienating them from the national Church, weakened the strongest cement of social order, and loosened the ties whereby men are bound to their native land. It carried disunion and discord into private life, breaking up families and friendships. The sooner you weaned your affections from those who, not being awakened, were of course in the way to perdition—the sooner the sheep withdrew from the goats, the better. Upon this head the monks have not been more remorseless than the Methodists. Wesley has said, in one of his sermons, that, how frequently parents should converse with their children when they are grown up, is to be determined by Christian prudence. "This also," says he, "will determine how long it is expedient for children, if it be at their own choice, to remain with their parents. In general, if they do not fear God, you should leave them as soon as is convenient. But, wherever you are, take care (if it be in your power) that they do not want the

necessaries or conveniences of life. As for all other relations, even brothers or sisters, if they are of the world, you are under no obligation to be intimate with them: you may be civil and friendly at a distance." What infinite domestic unhappiness must this abominable spirit have occasioned!

Mr. Wesley's notions concerning education must also have done great evil. No man was ever more thoroughly ignorant of the nature of children. If Wesley had been a father himself, he would have known that children are more easily governed by love than by fear. There is no subject, that of government excepted, upon which so many impracticable or injurious systems have been sent into the world, as that of education; and, among bad systems, that of Wesley is one of the very worst.

The rigid doctrine which he preached concerning riches, being only one degree more reasonable than that of St. Francis, prevented Methodism from extending itself as it otherwise might have done, among those classes where these notions would have been acted upon by zealous mothers. When Wesley considered the prodigious increase of his Society, "from two or three poor people, to hundreds, to thousands, to myriads," he affirmed that such an event, considered in all its circumstances, had not been seen upon earth since the time that St. John went to Abraham's bosom. But he perceived where the principle of decay was to be found. "Methodism," says he, "is only plain scriptural religion guarded by a few prudential regulations. The essence of it is holiness of heart and life: the circumstantials all point to this; and, as long as they are joined together in the people called Methodists, no weapon formed against them shall prosper. But if ever the

circumstantial parts are despised, the essential will soon be lost; and if ever the essential parts should evaporate, what remains will be dung and dross. I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, a religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay-tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionally increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away. Is there no way to prevent this—this continual decay of pure religion? We ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we *must* exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich. What way, then, can we take, that our money may not sink us to the nethermost hell? There is one way, and there is no other under heaven. If those who *gain* all they can, and *save* all they can, will likewise *give* all they can, then the more they gain the more they will grow in grace, and the more treasure they will lay up in heaven."

There were times when Wesley perceived and acknowledged how little real reformation had been effected in the great body of his followers.

Mr. Fletcher also confirms this unfavourable representation, and indicates one of its causes. There were members of the Society, he said, who spoke in the most glorious manner of Christ, and of their interest in His complete salvation, and yet were indulging the most unchristian tempers, and living in the greatest immoralities. "The smoothness of our doctrine," said he, "will atone for our most glaring inconsistencies. We have so whetted the antinomian appetite of our hearers, that they swallow down almost any thing."

It was among those classes of society whose moral and religious education had been blindly and culpably neglected, that Methodism produced an immediate beneficial effect; and, in cases of brutal depravity and habitual vice, it often produced a thorough reformation, which could not have been brought about by any less powerful agency than that of religious zeal. "Sinners of every other sort," said a good old clergyman, "have I frequently known converted to God: but an habitual drunkard I have never known converted." "But I," said Wesley, "have known five hundred, perhaps five thousand." To these moral miracles he appealed in triumph, as undeniable proofs that Methodism was an extraordinary work of God.

In estimating the effects of Methodism, the good which it has done indirectly must not be overlooked. Some evil also, as well as some good, the Methodists have indirectly caused. The principles of Methodism are strictly loyal; and the language which has been held by the Conference in all times of political disturbance, has been highly honourable to the Society, and in strict conformity to the intentions of the founder. On the other hand, the good which it has done, by rendering men good civil

subjects, is counteracted by separating them from the Church. This tendency Wesley did not foresee; and when he perceived it, he could not prevent it. But his conduct upon this point was neither consistent nor ingenuous. Soon after he had taken the memorable step of consecrating Dr. Coke as an American bishop, he arrogated to himself the same authority for Scotland as for America; and this, he maintained, was not a separation from the Church; "not from the Church of Scotland," said he, "for we were never connected therewith; not from the Church of England, for this is not concerned in the steps which are taken in Scotland. Whatever, then, is done, either in America or Scotland, is no separation from the Church of England. I have no thought of this: I have many objections against it." He had been led toward a separation imperceptibly, step by step; but it is not to his honour that he affected to deprecate it to the last, while he was evidently bringing it about by the measures which he pursued.

CHAPTER XXX.

WESLEY IN OLD AGE.

"LEISURE and I," said Wesley, "have taken leave of one another. I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged to me." This resolution was made in the prime of life, and never was resolution more punctually observed. "Lord, let me not live to be useless!" was the prayer which he uttered after seeing one, whom he had long known as an active and useful magistrate, reduced by age to be "a picture of human nature in disgrace, feeble in body and mind, slow of

speech and understanding." He was favoured with a constitution vigorous beyond that of ordinary men, and with an activity of spirit which is even rarer than his singular felicity of health and strength. Ten thousand cares of various kinds, he said, were no more weight or burden to his mind than ten thousand hairs were to his head. But, in truth, his only cares were those of superintending the work of his ambition, which continually prospered under his hands. Real cares he had none: no anxieties, no sorrows, no griefs which touched him to the quick. His manner of life was the most favourable that could have been devised for longevity. He rose early, and lay down at night with nothing to keep him waking, or trouble him in sleep. His mind was always in a pleasurable and wholesome state of activity; he was temperate in his diet, and lived in perpetual locomotion: and frequent change of air is perhaps of all things that which most conduces to joyous health and long life.

The time which Mr. Wesley spent in travelling was not lost. "History, poetry, and philosophy," said he, "I commonly read on horseback, having other employment at other times." He used to throw the reins on his horse's neck; and in this way he rode, in the course of his life, above a hundred thousand miles, without any accident of sufficient magnitude to make him sensible of the danger which he incurred. His friends, however, saw the danger; and in the sixty-ninth year of his age, they prevailed upon him to travel in a carriage, in consequence of a hurt which had produced a hydrocele. The ablest practitioners in Edinburgh were consulted upon his case, and assured him there was but one method of cure. "Perhaps but one natural one," says

he, "but I think God has more than one method of healing either the soul or the body." He read, upon the subject, a treatise which recommends a seton or a caustic; "but I am not inclined," said he, "to try either of them: I know a physician that has a shorter cure than either one or the other." After two years, however, he submitted to an operation, and obtained a cure. A little before this, he notices in his Journal the first night that he had ever lain awake: "I believe," he adds, "few can say this; in seventy-years I never lost one night's sleep."

He lived to preach at Kingswood under the shade of trees which he had planted; and he outlived the lease of the Foundry, the place which had been the cradle of Methodism. In 1778, the head-quarters of the Society were removed to the City-road, where a new chapel was built upon ground leased by the City. Great multitudes assembled to see the ceremony of laying the foundation, so that Wesley could not, without much difficulty, get through the press to lay the first stone, in which his name and the date were inserted upon a plate of brass: "This was laid by John Wesley, on April 1. 1777." "Probably," says he, "this will be seen no more by any human eye, but will remain there till the earth and the works thereof are burnt up." Charles, having long ceased to itinerate, used to officiate here; and the lay preachers, who were always jealous of him, were greatly offended, because he excluded them from the pulpit by serving the chapel twice on Sundays, when John was not in town. They complained of this, as invidious and derogatory to themselves; and Wesley so far yielded to their importunities as to promise that one of their body should

preach when Charles could not, an arrangement which preferred them to the clergymen in the Connection. Charles was hurt at this concession of his brother's, and with good reason. He represented that many persons, who had subscribed towards the building of the chapel, and were friends to Methodism, were yet not members of the Society, but true Churchmen; and that, from regard to them and to the Church, not out of ill will to the preachers, he wished the Church service to be continued there; for this also was made a matter of complaint against him. Next to his brother, he affirmed, he had the best right to preach there; and he used it because he had so short a time to preach anywhere. "I am sorry," said he, "you yielded to the lay preachers: I think them in the greatest danger through pride. They affect to believe that I act as a clergyman in opposition to them. If there was no man above them, what would become of them!—how would they tear one another in pieces! Convince them, if you can, that they want a clergyman over them to keep them and the flock together. But rather persuade them, if you can, to be the least, not the greatest, and then all will be right again. You have no alternative but to conquer that spirit, or be conquered by it. The preachers do not love the Church of England. What must be the consequence when we are gone? A separation is inevitable. Do you not wish to keep as many good people in the Church as you can? Something might be done to save the remainder, if you have resolution, and would stand by me as firmly as I will by you."

The remarkable talents with which the Wesley family were endowed, manifested themselves in the third

generation as strikingly as in the second. The two sons of Charles were among the most distinguished musicians of their age. Their father, perceiving the decided bent of their genius, very properly permitted them to follow it, and make the science of music their profession. In a letter to his brother, he said, "I am clear, without doubt, that my sons' concert is after the will and order of Providence." When John printed this letter, after his brother's death, he added, in a note, "I am *clear* of another mind." Dr. Coke also looked upon the concerts which were performed in Charles Wesley's own house as being highly dishonourable to God, and considered him as criminal, "by reason of his situation in the Church of Christ." But upon mature consideration the Doctor saw reason to alter this severe opinion. "It has established them," said Charles, "as musicians, in a safe and honourable way. We do not repent that we did not make a show or advantage of our swans. They may still make their fortunes, if I will venture them into the world; but I never wish them rich: you also agree with me in this. Our good old father neglected every opportunity of selling our souls to the Devil."

Before Mr. Wesley submitted to the operation, he considered himself as almost a disabled soldier; so little could he reconcile himself to the restriction from horse-exercise. So perfectly, however, was he re-established in health, that, a few months afterwards, upon entering his seventy-second year, he asked, "How is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago; that my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer than they were then; that I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand *cause* is the good pleasure of God, Who doth

whatsoever pleaseth Him. The chief *means* are, my constantly rising at four for about fifty years; my generally preaching at five in the morning—one of the most healthy exercises in the world; my never travelling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles in a year."

He himself had prayed that he might not live to be useless; and the extraordinary vigour which he preserved to extreme old age, might well make him believe, that, in this instance, his heart's desire had been granted. The seventy-eighth year of his age found him, he says, "by the blessing of God," just the same as when he entered the twenty-eighth; and, upon entering his eightieth, he blessed God that his time was not labour and sorrow, and that he found no more infirmities than when he was in the flower of manhood. But though this uncommon exemption from the burden of age was vouchsafed him, it was not in the nature of things that he should be spared from its feelings and regrets. The days of his childhood returned upon him when he visited Epworth; and, taking a solitary walk in the churchyard of that place, he says, "I felt the truth of '*one generation goeth, and another cometh.*' See how the earth drops its inhabitants, as the tree drops its leaves!" Wherever he went, his old disciples had passed away, and other generations had succeeded in their stead; and at the houses to which he looked on with pleasure in the course of his yearly rounds, he found more and more frequently, in every succeeding year, that death had been before him. Whole families dropped off, one by one, while he continued still in his green old age, full of life, and activity, and strength, and hope, and ardour. Such griefs were felt by him less keenly

than by other men; because every day brought with it to him change of scene and of persons; and because, busy as he was on earth, his desires were in heaven. "I had hopes," says he, in his Journal, "of seeing a friend at Lewisham in my way: and so I did: but it was in her coffin. It is well, since she finished her course with joy. In due time I shall see her in glory." To one of his young female correspondents he says, with melancholy anticipation, "I sometimes fear lest you also, as those I tenderly love generally have been, should be snatched away. But let us live to-day!" Many of his most ardent and most amiable disciples seem to have been cut off, in the flower of their youth, by consumption—a disease too frequently connected with what is beautiful in form, and intellect, and disposition.

Mr. Fletcher, though a much younger man, was summoned to his reward before him. That excellent person left England, under all the symptoms of advanced consumption, to try the effect of his native air; and, in the expectation of death, addressed a pastoral letter at that time to his parishioners. "I sometimes," said he, "feel a desire of being buried where you are buried, and having my bones lie in a common earthen bed with yours. But I soon resign that wish; and, leaving that particular to Providence, exult in thinking, that neither life nor death shall ever be able (while we hang on the Crucified, as He hung on the cross,) to separate us from Christ our head, nor from the love of each other, His members." His recovery, which appears almost miraculous, was ascribed by himself more to eating plentifully of cherries and grapes, than to any other remedies. His friends wished him to remain among them at Nyon:

"they urged my being born here," said he, "and I reply, that I was born again in England, and therefore that is, of course, the country which to me is the dearer of the two." He returned to his parish, and married Miss Bosanquet; a woman perfectly suited to him in age, temper, piety, and talents.

This good man died in 1785, and in the 56th year of his age.

It had been Mr. Wesley's hope, at one time, that after his death, Mr. Fletcher would succeed to the supremacy of the spiritual dominion which he had established. Mr. Fletcher was qualified for the succession by his thorough disregard of worldly advantages, his perfect piety, his devotedness to the people among whom he ministered, his affable manner, and his popular and persuasive oratory,—qualifications in which he was not inferior to Wesley himself. But he had neither the ambition nor the flexibility of Mr. Wesley; he would not have known how to rule or how to yield as he did: holiness with him was all in all. Wesley had the temper and talents of a statesman: in the Romish Church he would have been the general, if not the founder, of an order; or might have held a distinguished place in history, as a cardinal or a pope. Fletcher, in any communion, would have been a saint.

Mr. Wesley still continued to be the same marvellous old man. No one who saw him, even casually, in his old age, can have forgotten his venerable appearance. His face was remarkably fine; his complexion fresh to the last week of his life; his eye quick, and keen, and active. When you met him in the street of a crowded city, he attracted notice, not only by his band and cassock, and his long hair, white and bright as silver, but by his pace

and manner, both indicating that all his minutes were numbered, and that not one was to be lost. "Though I am always in haste," he says of himself, "I am never in a hurry; because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true, I travel four or five thousand miles in a year; but I generally travel alone in my carriage, and, consequently, am as retired ten hours a day as if I were in a wilderness. On other days, I never spend less than three hours (frequently ten or twelve) in the day alone. So there are few persons who spend so many hours secluded from all company." Thus it was that he found time to read much, and write voluminously. After his eightieth year, he went twice to Holland, a country in which Methodism, as Quakerism had done before it, met with a certain degree of success. Upon completing his eighty-second year, he says, "Is anything too hard for God? It is now eleven years since I have felt any such thing as weariness. Many times I speak till my voice fails, and I can speak no longer. Frequently I walk till my strength fails, and I can walk no farther; yet, even then, I feel no sensation of weariness, but am perfectly easy from head to foot. I dare not impute this to natural causes. It is the will of God." In his eighty-fourth year, he first began to feel decay; and, upon commencing his eighty-fifth, he observes, "I am not so agile as I was in times past; I do not run or walk so fast as I did. My sight is a little decayed. My left eye is grown dim, and hardly serves me to read. I have daily some pain in the ball of my right eye, as also in my right temple (occasioned by a blow received some months since), and in my right shoulder and arm, which I impute partly to a sprain, and partly to the rheumatism.

I find, likewise, some decay in my memory with regard to names and things lately past; but not at all with regard to what I have read or heard twenty, forty, or sixty years ago. Neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite, (though I want but a third part of the food I did once,) nor do I feel any such thing as weariness, either in travelling or preaching. And I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons, which I do as readily, and, I believe, as correctly, as ever." He acknowledged, therefore, that he had cause to praise God for bodily as well as spiritual blessings; and that he had suffered little, as yet, by "the rush of numerous years."

Other persons perceived his growing weakness, before he was thus aware of it himself: the most marked symptom was that of a frequent disposition to sleep during the day. He had always been able to lie down and sleep almost at will, like a mere animal, or a man in little better than an animal state,—a consequence, probably, of the incessant activity of his life: this he himself rightly accounted one of the causes of his excellent health, and it was, doubtless, a consequence, of it also. But the involuntary slumbers which came upon him in the latter years of his life, were indications that the machine was wearing out, and would soon come to a stop. In 1788, he lost his brother Charles, who, during many years, had been his zealous coadjutor, and, through life, his faithful and affectionate friend. Latterly their opinions had differed. Charles saw the evil tendency of some part of the discipline, and did not hesitate to say that he abominated the band-meetings, which he had formerly approved; and, adhering faithfully himself to the Church, he regretted

the separation which he foresaw, and disapproved of John's conduct, in taking steps which manifestly tended to facilitate it. Indeed, Mr. Wesley laid aside, at last, all those pretensions by which he had formerly excused himself; and, in the year 1787, with the assistance of two of his clerical coadjutors, Mr. Creighton and Mr. Peard Dickinson, he ordained two of his preachers, and consecrated Mather a bishop or superintendent. But this decided difference of opinion produced no diminution of love between the two brothers. They had agreed to differ; and, to the last, John was not more jealous of his own authority, than Charles was solicitous that he should preserve it. "Keep it while you live," he said, "and after your death, *detur digniori* or rather, *dignioribus*. You cannot settle the succession: you cannot divine how God will settle it." Charles, though he attained to his eightieth year, was a valetudinarian through the greatest part of his life, in consequence, it is believed, of having injured his constitution by close application and excessive abstinence at Oxford. He had always dreaded the act of dying; and his prayer was, that God would grant him patience and an easy death. A calmer frame of mind, and an easier passage, could not have been granted him; the powers of life were fairly worn out, and, without any disease, he fell asleep. By his own desire he was buried, not in his brother's burying-ground, because it was not consecrated, but in the churchyard of Mary-le-bone, the parish in which he resided; and his pall was supported by eight clergymen of the Church of England.

It was reported that Charles had said, his brother would not outlive him more than a year. The prediction might have been hazarded with sufficient

likelihood of its fulfilment; for John was then drawing near the grave. Upon his eighty-sixth birthday, he says, "I now find I grow old. My sight is decayed, so that I cannot read a small print, unless in a strong light. My strength is decayed; so that I walk much slower than I did some years since. My memory of names, whether of persons or places, is decayed, till I stop a little to recollect them. What I should be afraid of is, if I took thought for the morrow, that my body should weigh down my mind, and create either stubbornness, by the decrease of my understanding, or peevishness, by the increase of bodily infirmities. But Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord, my God!" His strength now diminished so much, that he found it difficult to preach more than twice a day; and for many weeks he abstained from his five o'clock morning sermons, because a slow and settled fever parched his mouth. Finding himself a little better, he resumed the practice, and hoped to hold on a little longer; but, at the beginning of the year 1790, he writes, "I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim; my right hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning; I have a lingering fever almost every day, my motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God! I do not slack my labours: I can preach and write still." In the middle of the same year, he closed his cash account-book with the following words, written with a tremulous hand, so as to be scarcely legible: "For upwards of eighty-six years I have kept my accounts exactly: I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction, that I save all I can, and give all I can; that is, all I have." His strength was now quite gone, and no glasses would help his sight. "But I

feel no pain," he says, "from head to foot; only, it seems, nature is exhausted, and, humanly speaking, will sink more and more, till

The weary springs of life stand still at last."

On February 1st, 1791, he wrote his last letter to America. It shows how anxious he was that his followers should consider themselves as one united body. "See," said he, "that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men, that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue." He expressed also a sense that his hour was almost come. "Those that desire to write," said he, "or say anything to me, have no time to lose; for *time has shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind*:"—words which his father had used in one of the last letters that he addressed to his sons at Oxford. On the 17th of that month, he took cold after preaching at Lambeth. For some days he struggled against an increasing fever, and continued to preach till the Wednesday following, when he delivered his last sermon. From that time he became daily weaker and more lethargic, and on March 2nd he died in peace; being in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and the sixty-fifth of his ministry.

During his illness he said, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen; and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel." Some years before, he had prepared a vault for himself, and for those itinerant preachers who might die in London. In his will he directed that six poor men should have twenty shillings each for carrying his body to the grave; "for I

particularly desire," said he, "that there may be no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me, and are following me to Abraham's bosom. I solemnly adjure my executors, in the name of God, punctually to observe this." At the desire of many of his friends, his body was carried into the chapel the day preceding the interment, and there lay in a kind of state becoming the person, dressed in his clerical habit, with gown, cassock, and band; the old clerical cap on his head; a Bible in one hand, and a white handkerchief in the other. The face was placid, and the expression which death had fixed upon his venerable features, was that of a serene and heavenly smile. The crowds who flocked to see him were so great, that it was thought prudent, for fear of accidents, to accelerate the funeral, and perform it between five and six in the morning. The intelligence, however, could not be kept entirely secret, and several hundred persons attended at that unusual hour. Mr. Richardson, who performed the service, had been one of his preachers almost thirty years. When he came to that part of the service, "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear *brother*," his voice changed, and he substituted the word *father*; and the feeling with which he did this was such, that the congregation, who were shedding silent tears, burst at once into loud weeping.

Mr. Wesley left no other property behind him than the copyright and current editions of his works, and this he bequeathed to the use of the Connection after his debts should have been paid. There was a debt of one thousand six hundred pounds to the family of his brother Charles; and he had drawn also for some years

upon the fund for superannuated preachers, to support those who were in full employment. When he was told that some persons murmured at this, he used to answer, "What can I do? Must the work stand still? The men and their families cannot starve. I have no money. Here it is: we must use it; it is for the Lord's work." The money thus appropriated, and the interest due upon it, amounted to a considerable sum. In building chapels, also, the expenses of the Connection outran its means, so that its finances were left in an embarrassed state. The number of his preachers at the time of his death amounted in the British dominions to 313, in the United States to 198; the number of members in the British dominions was 76,968, in the United States 57,621.

* * * * *

Such was the life, and such the labours of John Wesley; a man of great views, great energy, and great virtues. That he awakened a zealous spirit, not only in his own community, but in a Church which needed something to quicken it, is acknowledged by the members of that Church itself; that he encouraged enthusiasm and extravagance, lent a ready ear to false and impossible relations, and spread superstition as well as piety, would hardly be denied by the candid and judicious among his own people. In its immediate effects, the powerful principle of religion which he and his preachers diffused, has reclaimed many from a course of sin, has supported many in poverty, sickness, and affliction, and has imparted to many a triumphant joy in death. What Wesley says of the miracles wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, may fitly be applied here: "In many of these instances, I see

great superstition, as well as strong faith: but God makes allowance for invincible ignorance, and blesses the faith, notwithstanding the superstition." Concerning the general and remoter consequences of Methodism, opinions will differ. They who consider the wide-spreading schism to which it has led, and who know that the welfare of the country is vitally connected with its Church Establishment, may think that the evil overbalances the good. But the good may endure, and the evil be only for a time. In every other sect there is an inherent spirit of hostility to the Church of England, too often and too naturally connected with diseased political opinions. So it was in the beginning, and so it will continue to be, as long as those sects endure. But Methodism is free from this. The extravagances which accompanied its growth are no longer encouraged, and will altogether be discountenanced, as their real nature is understood. This cannot be doubted. It is in the natural course of things that it should purify itself gradually from whatever is objectionable in its institutions. Nor is it beyond the bounds of reasonable hope, that, conforming itself to the original intention of its founders, it may again draw towards the Establishment, from which it has seceded, and deserve to be recognised as an auxiliary institution, its ministers being analogous to the regulars, and its members to the tertiaries and various confraternities of the Romish Church. The obstacles to this are surely not insuperable, perhaps not so difficult as they may appear. And were this effected, John Wesley would then be ranked, not only among the most remarkable and influential men of his age, but among the great benefactors of his country and his kind.

CHRONOLOGY

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1662			Samuel Wesley, the elder, born.
1669			Susannah Annesley, John's mother, born.
1690 (?)			Marriage of Samuel Wesley and Susannah Annesley.
1702			Queen Anne's Accession.
1703	June 17		John Wesley born at Epworth.
1707	Dec. 18		Charles Wesley born.
1709			Fire at Epworth Parsonage.
1711		8	Wesley's first communion.
1714			George I.'s Accession. Whitefield born.
1714	Jan. 28	10½	Wesley entered at Charterhouse.
1720	July 13	17	Wesley entered at Christ Church, Oxford.
1724		21	Wesley takes B.A. degree.
1725	Sept. 19	22	Wesley ordained deacon.
1725	Oct. 16		Wesley preached his first sermon at South Leigh.
1726	March 17	23	Wesley elected fellow of Lincoln.
1727		24	George II.'s Accession. Wesley becomes curate to his father at Epworth and Wroote. Takes M.A. degree.
1728	Sept. 29	26	Wesley ordained priest.
1729		27	Wesley returns to Oxford, and joins Methodists.
1732			Colony of Georgia founded.
1733		30	Wesley's first printed work appeared—*A Collection of Prayers for Every Day in the Week.*
1735		32	Wesley's father, Samuel, died.
1735	Oct.		Charles Wesley ordained deacon and priest. John's edition of the *Imitatio* published.
1736	Feb. 5	33	Wesley lands in Georgia.
1738	Feb 1	35	Wesley arrives in England from Georgia.
1738			Goes in the summer to visit the Moravians at Marienborn and Herrnhut.
1738	May 24		Meeting in Aldersgate Street, where Wesley was "converted."
1739	Aug. 16	36	Charles Wesley begins itinerancy.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1739	Nov. 11		Wesley preached for first time at the Foundry.
1739			Methodist Societies really began this year, in the formation of the United Society. Early in the year Wesley began preaching in the open air at Bristol. Formation of bands.
1741			Whitefield goes to Scotland.
1742		39	Wesley's mother dies.
1743	May 29	40	West Street Chapel opened.
1743			General Rules for Methodists drawn up by John and Charles Wesley. Welsh Calvinistic Methodism organised.
1744		41	Conference instituted.
1745		42	John and Charles Wesley publish *Hymns on the Lord's Supper, with Dr. Brevint's Preface Concerning the Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice.*
1747		44	Wesley first visited Ireland. Published *Primitive Physic.*
1748		45	Kingswood School founded.
1749		46	First volume of the *Christian Library* published. Charles Wesley marries.
1751	Feb.	48	Wesley married to Mrs. Vazeille.
1751			Visits Scotland.
1755		52	Wesley's *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* published. Completion of the fifty volumes of the *Christian Library.* The Covenant instituted.
1756			Charles Wesley ceases to itinerate.
1760		57	George III.'s Accession. Four volumes of Wesley's sermons published.
1764		61	Wesley invokes the aid of the Greek prelate, Erasmus, Bishop of Arcadia.
1770		67	Whitefield died in New England. Arminians expelled from Trevecca College.
1774		71	Robert Southey born [*ob.* 1843].
1775			*Calm Address to our American Colonies* written.
1776	Jan. 1	73	First number of *Arminian Magazine* appeared.
1776			Wesley and Dr. Coke meet.
1777	April 1	74	Wesley laid foundation of "the new chapel near the City Road."
1777			Visit to the Isle of Man.
1778	Nov. 1		Methodist headquarters removed to City Road Chapel. Wesley's *Serious Advice to the People of England* written.
1781		78	Wesley again visits the Isle of Man.
1784	Feb. 28	81	Methodist Deed of Declaration. "The grand climacterical year of Methodism."
1784			Wesley ordains for first time.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1784	Sept. 2		Sets Dr. Coke apart as Superintendent for America.
1785			John Fletcher dies.
1787			Wesley visits Channel Islands.
1788	March 29		Charles Wesley dies. Buried in St. Marylebone Churchyard.
1789	May	86	Wesley preaches sermon on *The Ministerial Office*, published, in 1790, in the *Arminian Magazine*.
1790		87	Wesley's Valedictory Address in *Arminian Magazine*.
1791	Feb. 23		Wesley preaches last sermon.
1791	March 2		Wesley dies.
1791	March 9		Wesley buried.

1820		Southey's *Life of Wesley* published.
1843		Robert Southey died, *æt.* 69.
1846		Third edition of the Life, edited by C. C. Southey, with Notes by S. T. Coleridge, and Alexander Knox's "Remarks on the Life and Character of John Wesley."
1879	Dec. 7	City Road Chapel nearly destroyed by fire.
1891	March 2	Centenary of Wesley's death. Statue by Adams Acton, in front of City Road Chapel, unveiled.
1891	Nov. 5	City Road Chapel reopened.
1898	March 2	Dedication and endowment of Wesley's house.
1903	June 17	Bicentenary of Wesley's birth.

APPENDIX

SOUTHEY AND HIS BOOK.

THE life of Robert Southey, which began in 1774 and ended in 1843, is one long record of literary work. As poet, reviewer, historian, and biographer, he produced an output of extraordinary variety. Of the two famous biographies he wrote, those of Nelson and Wesley, the former is the more widely known and generally attractive, the latter appeals rather to a particular but very numerous class of readers. In 1816, four years before *The Life of Wesley* was published, Southey was thinking a good deal about the relation of Methodism to the Church. "The state of the Church," he wrote on October 2 in that year, "is another important question, assailed as it is on all sides. I think it would be possible to take in the Methodists as a sort of Cossacks, or certainly to employ those persons henceforward in the Establishment who, if not thus employed, will swell the number of the Methodists, and act against it. There are no differences of doctrine in the way; it is but to let the licence come from the clergyman instead of the magistrate, to invent some such name as coadjutor for those who have a 'call'; let them catechise the children, *convert* the women, reclaim the reprobates, and meet on weekdays and at extra hours on Sundays in the church to expound or sing psalms; a little condescension, a little pay, and a little flattery."

While he was in that state of mind, he conceived the plan of writing Wesley's biography, which he published in 1820. One reason for his undertaking the task is given in a letter to Grosvenor C. Bedford, in which he mentions its completion: "Its merit will hardly be appreciated by any person, unless it be compared with what the former biographers have done; then, indeed, it would be seen what they have overlooked, how completely the composition is my own, and what pains it must have required to collect together the pieces for this great tessellated tablet."

His forecast of its success is interesting: "I am inclined to think that it will obtain a moderate sale, and a durable reputation."

In the same letter he also wrote: "In parts, I think, some of my own best writing will be found. It is written with too fair a spirit to satisfy any particular set of men. For the 'religious public' it will be too tolerant and philosophical; for the Liberals it will be too devotional; the Methodists will not endure any censure of their founder and his institutions; the High Churchman will as little be able to allow any praise of them. Some will complain of it as being heavy and dull; others will not think it serious enough."

If Southey claimed for his *Life of Wesley* that it filled in the gaps left by those who had preceded him, it was his expressed intention to render his own work "less incomplete" by incorporating in a new edition "whatever new information has been brought forward by subsequent biographers, and of course to correct every error that has been pointed out, or that I myself can discover." Death frustrated his design, but his son Cuthbert piously executed it by re-editing the work in 1846. At the same time he carried out another intention of his father's, of publishing the Remarks of an intimate friend of Wesley, Mr. Alexander Knox, who, in "a long and most admirable paper," Southey says, "has convinced me that I was mistaken in supposing ambition entered largely into Mr. Wesley's actuating impulses." This readiness on Southey's part to withdraw what he wrote in error, and to publish along with his own work the corrections of another writer, gives strength to his statement that he approached the task of Wesley's biographer without the consciousness of "any possible circumstance which might tend to bias me one way or other from the straight line of impartial truth." Opinions have differed respecting Southey's qualifications for this particular work, but it is generally agreed that no Life of Wesley has yet appeared that can be compared for literary merit with Southey's.

The text followed here is that of the 1846 edition.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

THE original edition of *The Life of Wesley* contained, besides many footnotes, a large appendix of Notes and Illustrations. Of these a few have been retained here. In the edition of 1846 the notes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge were inserted, some of which can be seen in the present volume with the signature "S. T. C." attached. The 1846 edition was especially noticeable for its supplement containing "Remarks on the Life and Character of John Wesley, by the late Alexander Knox, Esq." Considerations o ispace forbade their entire reproduction, but it was thought that one or two

extracts would be interesting. The present editor has also added a few notes which seemed necessary. It will be understood that the unsigned notes are Southey's own.

P. 6. *A poor scholar.*—A *pauper scholaris* at Exeter College was the lowest in rank of the non-foundationers, of whom there were four grades.—ED.

P. 7. *Three daughters.*—Southey should have said seven, of whom six were married.—ED.

P. 21. *Dr. Priestley.*—Joseph Priestley, LL.D., F.R.S., the well-known Birmingham chemist and physicist.—ED.

P. 26. *À Kempis.*—Wesley read the *Imitatio* in Dean Stanhope s translation.—ED.

A short time before he left England, he seems to have published [1735—Ed.] a corrected version of Thomas à Kempis, and to have translated a Preface which had not appeared in any English edition.

P. 39. *Methodists not a new name.*—"It is not generally known," says Mr. Crowther, "that the name of Methodist had been given long before the days of Mr. Wesley to a religious party in England, which was distinguished by some of those marks which are supposed to characterise the present Methodists. A person called John Spencer, who was librarian of Sion College, 1657, during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, in a book which he published, consisting of extracts from various authors, speaks of the eloquence and elegance of the Sacred Scriptures, and asks, 'where are now our Anabaptists, and plain pack-staff Methodists, who esteem all flowers of rhetoric in sermons no better than stinking weeds?'

"Gale also, in his Fourth Part ot the Court of the Gentiles, mentions a religious sect, whom he calls 'The New Methodists.'"

History of the Wesleyan Methodists, p. 24.

P. 41. *Hervey.*—James Hervey, of Lincoln College, Rector of Weston Favell, author of *Meditations among the Tombs* and *Theron and Aspasia.*—ED.

P. 42. *Snuffers.*—So the word is printed in his own account of his life; it seems to mean the sleeves which are worn by cleanly men in dirty employments, and may possibly be a misprint for *scoggers*, as such sleeves are called in some parts of England.

P. 45. *Scheme of self-examination.*—This paper is too curious in itself, and in its style too characteristic of Wesley, to be omitted here. It is entitled,

Love of God and Simplicity; means of which are Prayer and Meditation.

Have I been simple and recollected in every thing I said or did? Have I, 1. Been *simple* in every thing, *i. e.* looked upon God as my good, my pattern, my one desire, my disposer, parent of good; acted wholly for him; bounded my views with the present action or hour? 2. *Recollected*? *i. e.* Has this simple view been distinct and uninterrupted? Have I done any thing without a previous perception of its being the will of God? or without a perception of its being an exercise or a means of the virtue of the day? Have I said any thing without it?

2. Have I prayed with fervour? At going in and out of church? In the church? Morning and evening in private? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with my friends? At rising? Before lying down? On Saturday noon? All the time I was engaged in exterior work? In private? Before I went into the place of public or private prayer, for help therein? Have I, wherever I was, gone to church morning and evening, unless for necessary mercy? and spent from one hour to three in private? Have I in private prayer frequently stopt short, and observed what fervour? Have I repeated it over and over, till I adverted to every word? Have I at the beginning of every prayer or paragraph owned, I cannot pray? Have I paused before I concluded in His name, and adverted to my Saviour now interceding for me at the right hand of God and offering up these prayers?

3. Have I daily used ejaculations? *i. e.* Have I every hour prayed for humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day? Considered with *whom* I was the last hour, *what* I did, and *how*? With regard to recollection, love of man, humility, self-denial, resignation, and thankfulness? Considered the next hour in the same respects, offered all I do to my Redeemer, begged His assistance in every particular, and commended my soul to His keeping? Have I done this deliberately, (not in haste,) seriously, (not doing any thing else the while,) and fervently as I could?

4. Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day? *i. e.* Have I prayed for it at going out and coming in? Deliberately, seriously, fervently?

5. Have I used a collect at nine, twelve, and three; and grace before and after eating? Aloud at my own room, deliberately, seriously, fervently?

6. Have I duly meditated? Every day, unless for necessary mercy? 1. From six, etc., to prayers? 2. From four to five, what was particular in the providence of this day? How ought the virtue of the day to have been exerted upon it? How did it fall short? (Here faults.) 3. On Sunday, from six to seven with *Kempis*? from three to four on redemption, or God's attributes? Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one on the Passion? After ending a book, on what I had marked in it?

Love of Man.

1st. Have I been zealous to do and active in doing good? *i. e.* 1. Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and preventing, removing, or lessening evil?

2. Have I pursued it with my might?

3. Have I thought any thing too dear to part with, to serve my neighbour?

4. Have I spent an hour at least every day in speaking to some one or other?

5. Have I given any one up till he *expressly* renounced me?

6. Have I, before I spoke to any, learned, as far as I could, his temper, way of thinking, past life, and peculiar hindrances, internal and external? Fixed the point to be aimed at? Then the means to it?

7. Have I, in speaking, proposed the motives, then the difficulties, then balanced them, then exhorted him to consider both calmly and deeply, and to pray earnestly for help?

8. Have I, in speaking to a stranger, explained what religion is not, (not negative, not external,) and what it is; (a recovery of the image of God;) searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop there? Exhorted and directed him?

9. Have I persuaded all I could to attend public prayers, sermons, and sacraments? And in general to obey the laws of the Church Universal, the Church of *England*, the State, the University, and their respective Colleges?

10. Have I, when taxed with any act of obedience, avowed it, and turned the attack with sweetness and firmness?

11. Have I disputed upon any practical point, unless it was to be practised just then?

12. Have I, in disputing, (1.) desired my opponent to define the terms of the question: to limit it: what he grants, what denies: (2.) delayed speaking my opinion; let him explain and prove his: then insinuated and pressed objections?

13. Have I, after every visit, asked him who went with me, Did I say any thing wrong?

14. Have I, when any one asked advice, directed and exhorted him with all my power?

2dly. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbour in virtue or pleasure? Grieved with him in pain, for him in sin?

3dly. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not anger?

4thly. Have I thought or spoke unkindly of or to him? Have I revealed any evil of any one, unless it was necessary to some particular good I had in view? Have I then done it with all the tenderness of phrase and manner consistent with that end? Have I any way appeared to approve them that did otherwise?

5thly. Has good-will been, and appeared to be, the spring of all my actions towards others?

6thly. Have I duly used intercession? 1. Before, 2. After speaking to any? 3. For my friends on Sunday? 4. For my pupils on Monday? 5. For those who have particularly desired it, on Wednesday and Friday? 6. For the family in which I am every day?

P. 47. *William Law.*—A Nonjuring divine, 1686—1761.—ED.

P. 71. *Immersion.*—Wesley would willingly have persuaded himself that this practice was salutary, as well as regular. His Journal contains the following entry at this time:—

"Mary Welch, aged eleven days, was baptized according to the custom of the first Church and the rule of the Church of England, by immersion. The child was ill then, but recovered from that hour."

P. 80. *Sophia Causton.*—Southey makes no reference to some other love-affairs of Wesley's, *e.g.* with Miss Betty Kirkham and Grace Murray; nor to the correspondence with Mrs. Pendarves, in which Wesley himself figures as Cyrus, Miss Kirkham as Varenese, and Mrs. Pendarves as Aspasia.—ED.

P. 99. *The lot.*—This remarkable instance of Wesley's predilection for the practice of sortilege is not noticed by either of his biographers. Whitefield himself relates it, in a letter published at the time of their separation. "We sailed immediately," he adds. "Some months after, I received a letter from you at Georgia, wherein you wrote words to this effect: 'Though God never before gave me a wrong lot, yet perhaps He suffered me to have such a lot at that time, to try what was in your heart.' I should never," says Whitefield, "have published this private transaction to the world, did not the glory of God call me to it. It is plain you had a wrong lot given you here, and justly, because you tempted God in drawing one." Whitefield afterwards, in his remarks upon Bishop Lavington's book, refers to this subject in a manner which does him honour. "My mentioning," he says, "Mr. Wesley's casting a lot on a private occasion, known only to God and ourselves, has put me to great pain. It was wrong in me to publish a private transaction to the world; and very ill-judged to think the glory of God could be promoted by unnecessarily exposing my friend. For this I have asked both God and him pardon years ago. And though I believe both have forgiven me, yet I believe I shall never be able to forgive myself. As it was a public fault, I think it should be publicly acknowledged; and I thank a kind Providence for giving me this opportunity of doing it."

P. 114. *Boehler.*—Is not this *too* like, tell a lie long enough and often enough, and you will be sure to end in believing it?—And yet much may be said, where the moral interest of mankind

demands it, and reason does not countermand. Or where the Scripture seems expressly to assert it.—S. T. C.

P. 116. *A man of Wesley's acuteness.*—I am persuaded that Wesley never rose above the region of logic and strong volition. The moment an idea presents itself to him, his understanding intervenes to eclipse it, and he substitutes a conception by some process of deduction. Nothing is *immediate* to him. Nor could it be otherwise with a mind so ambitious, so constitutionally, if not a commanding, yet a *ruling* genius,—*i.e.*, no genius at all, but a height of talent with unusual strength and activity of individual will.—S. T. C.

P. 131. *Wesley and Count Zinzendorf.*—Mr. Hampson in his Life of Wesley relates that the Count, who regarded him as a pupil, ordered him one day to dig in the garden. "When Mr. Wesley had been there some time, working in his shirt, and in a high perspiration, he called upon him to get into a carriage that was in waiting, to pay a visit to a German Count; nor would he suffer him either to wash his hands or to put on his coat. 'You must be simple, my brother!' was a full answer to all his remonstrances; and away he went like a crazed man *in statu quo.*" Mr. Hampson adds that he has no doubt of the authenticity of this anecdote; but it is not likely that Zinzendorf, who had been in England, should have exacted this proof of docility from an English clergyman, nor that Wesley should have submitted to it. Similar but more extravagant tales are common in monastic history.

P. 143. *Even frenzy was rebuked.*—O dear and honoured Southey! this the favourite of my library among many favourites, this the book which I can read for the twentieth time with delight, when I can read nothing else at all; *this* darling book is nevertheless an unsafe book for all of unsettled minds. How many admirable young men do I know or have seen, whose minds would be a shuttlecock between the battledores, which the bi-partite author keeps in motion! A delightful game between you and your duplicate—and for those like you, harmless. But oh! what other duplicate is there of Robert Southey, but that of his own projection! The same facts and incidents as those recorded in Scripture, and told in the same words—and the workers, alas! in the next page, these are enthusiasts, fanatics; but could this have been avoided, salvâ veritate?—Answer. The *manner*, the *way*, might have been avoided.—S. T. C.

P. 155. *Journeys.*—"It was a rule of the Society," says Dr. Whitehead, "that any person who desired or designed to take a journey, should first, if it were possible, have the approbation of the bands; so entirely at this time were the ministers under the direction of the people." But as there were no settled ministers,

and no settled place at this time, it is evident that this rule had nothing to do with church discipline.

P. 165. *Collections.*—At Kennington, £47 were collected one evening, of which £16 were in halfpence. At Moorfields, £52 19*s.* 6*d.*, of which more than £20 were in halfpence.

P. 166. *French prophets.*—Dr. Stukeley says that a group of tumuli in Wiltshire, was called by the country people the prophets' barrows, "because the French prophets, thirty years ago (1710), set up a standard on the largest, and preached to the multitude!" —Sir R. Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*, p. 210.

P. 173. *Tatterdemalions.*—Oh, what an advantage such language must have given to his brothers!—S. T. C.

P. 174. *Samuel Wesley.*—In the History of Dissenters by David Bogue and James Bennett (vol. iii. p. 9) Samuel Wesley is called "'a worldly priest, who hated all pretence to more religion than our neighbours as an infallible mark of a Dissenter!" The amiable spirit which is displayed in this sentence, its liberality, its charity, and its regard to truth, require no comment.

P. 174. "*We could not but rejoice.*"—This passage may probably have been the cause of the breach between John Wesley and his brother's family, and to that breach the preservation of Samuel's letters is owing. Wesley was very desirous of getting the whole correspondence into his possession, "but the daughter and grand-daughter of Samuel being offended at his conduct, would never deliver them to him. It was taken for granted that he would have suppressed them. They gave them to Mr. Badcock with a view to their publication after Wesley's death, and Badcock dying before then, gave them to Dr. Priestley with the same intent."

P. 179. *Breach with Moravians.*—There was an old shed, known as the Foundry, used for casting cannon, in Windmill Hill, afterwards Windmill Street, Finsbury Square. Hither the Methodists withdrew after the breach with the Moravians. Here Mrs. Wesley, John Wesley's mother, died, 1742. She was buried in Bunhill Fields Cemetery.—ED.

P. 192. *Leaders.*—The leader has a class-paper, upon which he marks, opposite to the name of each member, upon every day of meeting, whether the person has attended or not; and if absent, whether the absence was owing to distance of abode, business, sickness, or neglect. And every member has a printed class-ticket, with a text of Scripture upon it, and a letter. These tickets must be renewed every quarter, the text being changed, and the letter also, till all the alphabet has been gone through,

and then it begins again. One shilling is paid by every member upon receiving a new ticket; and no person, without a proper ticket, is considered a member of the Society. These were later regulations; but the main system of finance and inspection, for which the class-meetings provide, was established at this time, in consequence of the debt incurred for the first meeting-house.

P. 208. *Mrs. Wesley's epitaph.*—The epitaph which her sons placed upon her tombstone is remarkable. Instead of noticing the virtues of so extraordinary and exemplary a woman, they chose to record what they were pleased to call her conversion, and to represent her as if she had lived in ignorance of real Christianity during the life of her excellent husband.

This is the inscription:—

Here lies the body of Mrs. Susannah Wesley, the youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley.

In sure and steadfast hope to rise
And claim her mansion in the skies,
A Christian here her flesh laid down,
The cross exchanging for the crown.

True daughter of affliction she,
Inured to pain and misery,
Mourn'd a long night of griefs and fears,
A legal night of seventy years.

The Father then reveal'd His Son,
Him in the broken bread made known;
She knew and felt her sins forgiven,
And found the earnest of her Heaven.

Meet for the fellowship above,
She heard the call, "Arise, My Love!"
"I come," her dying looks replied,
And lamb-like as her Lord she died.

The third stanza alludes to her persuasion, that she had received an assurance of the forgiveness of her sins at the moment when her son-in-law Hall was administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to her.

P. 211. *Charles Wesley accused of praying for the Pretender.*—I have read somewhere a more comical blunder upon this subject. A preacher reading in Jeremiah x. 22, "Behold, the noise of the *bruit* is come, and a great commotion from the *north* country," took it for granted that the rebellion in Scotland was meant, and that the *brute* was the Pretender.

P. 212. *Bath.*—It was at Bath, in 1766, that Horace Walpole heard Wesley preach. He writes: "Wesley is a lean, elderly

man, fresh-coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a *soupçon* of curl at the ends. Wondrous clean, but as evidently an actor as Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it; for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence in it; but towards the end he exalted his voice, and acted very vulgar enthusiasm, decried learning, and told stories, like Latimer, of the fool of his college, who said, 'I *thanks* God for everything.'" —*Private Correspondence*, vol. iii., p. 191.

P. 215. *Wesley's travels.*—Wesley probably paid more for turnpikes than any other man in England, for no other person travelled so much; and it rarely happened to him to go twice through the same gate in one day. Thus he felt the impost heavily, and, being a horseman, was not equally sensible of the benefit derived from it. This may account for his joining in what was at one time the popular cry. Writing in 1770, he says, "I was agreeably surprised to find the whole road from Thirsk to Stokesley, which used to be extremely bad, better than most turnpikes. The gentlemen had exerted themselves, and raised money enough to mend it effectually. So they have done for several hundred miles in Scotland, and throughout all Connaught, in Ireland. And so undoubtedly they might do throughout all England, without saddling the poor people with the vile imposition of turnpikes for ever."

P. 234. *Contradictions.*—"The expression being *born again* was not first used by our Lord in His conversation with Nicodemus. It was in common use among the Jews when our Saviour appeared among them. When an adult heathen was convinced that the Jewish religion was of God, and desired to join therein, it was the custom to baptize him first, before he was admitted to circumcision. And when he was baptized, he was said to be born again; by which they meant, that he who was before a child of the devil was now adopted into the family of God, and accounted one of His children."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. vii., p. 296.

Yet, in the same sermon, Wesley affirms, "that Baptism is not the New Birth, that they are not one and the same thing. Many, indeed, seem to imagine that they are just the same; at least they speak as if they thought so; but I do not know that this opinion is publicly avowed by any denomination of Christians whatever. Certainly it is not by any within these kingdoms, whether of the Established Church or dissenting from it. The judgment of the latter is clearly declared in their large Catechism: '*Q.* What are the parts of a Sacrament? *A.* The parts of a Sacrament are two; the one an outward and sensible sign, the other an inward and spiritual grace signified. *Q.* What is Baptism? *A.* Baptism is a

sacrament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water to be a sign and seal of regeneration by His Spirit.' Here it is manifest, baptism, the sign, is spoken of as distinct from regeneration, the thing signified."

Where was Wesley's logic? or where his fairness? Can anything be more evident than that this Catechism describes regeneration as the inward and spiritual grace, and the act of baptism (sprinkling or immersion) as the outward and visible sign. What follows is as bad.

"In the Church Catechism, likewise, the judgment of our Church is declared with the utmost clearness. '*Q.* What meanest thou by this word Sacrament? *A.* I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. *Q.* What is the outward part or form in baptism? *A.* Water, wherein the person is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Q.* What is the inward part, or thing signified? *A.* A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.' Nothing therefore is plainer than that, according to the Church of England, baptism is not the New Birth."

I do not believe that an instance of equal blindness or disingenuity (whichever it may be thought) can be found in all the other parts of Wesley's works. So plain is it that the words of the Catechism mean precisely what Wesley affirms they do not mean, that, in the very next page, he contradicts himself in the clearest manner, and says: "It is certain, our Church supposes, that all who are baptized in their infancy are at the same time born again. And it is allowed, that the whole office for the baptism of infants proceeds upon this supposition. Nor is it an objection of any weight against this, that we cannot comprehend how this work can be wrought in infants." —Vol. vii., p. 302.

P. 251. *Wesley's helpers.*—The Rules of a Helper are strikingly characteristic of Wesley, both in their manner and their spirit:—

"1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment: never be triflingly employed. Never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

"2. Be serious. Let your motto be, Holiness to the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

"3. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women; particularly with young women in private.

"4. Take no step towards marriage without first acquainting us with your design.

"5. Believe evil of no one; unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on everything: you know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

"6. Speak evil of no one; else *your* word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

"7. Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, and as soon as may be, else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

"8. Do not affect the gentleman. You have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing-master. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

"9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin; not of fetching wood (if time permit) or of drawing water; not of cleaning your own shoes, or your neighbour's.

"10. Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time: and, in general, do not *mend* our rules, but *keep* them; not for wrath, but for conscience' sake.

"11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most.

"12. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such, it is your part to employ your time in the manner which we direct; partly in preaching and visiting the flock from house to house; partly in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful that you should do *that part* of the work which we advise, at *those* times and places which we judge most for His glory."

P. 258. *Service of the Methodists.*—Mr. Wesley prided himself upon the decency of worship in his chapels. He says: "The longer I am absent from London, and the more I attend the service of the Church in other places, the more I am convinced of the unspeakable advantage which the people called Methodists enjoy. I mean, even with regard to public worship, particularly on the Lord's Day. The church where they assemble is not gay or splendid; which might be an hindrance on the one hand: nor sordid or dirty, which might give distaste on the other; but plain as well as clean. The persons who assemble there are not a gay, giddy crowd, who come chiefly to see and be seen; nor a company of goodly, formal, outside Christians, whose religion lies in a dull round of duties; but a people, most of whom know, and the rest earnestly seek to worship God in spirit and in truth. Accordingly, they do not spend their time there in bowing and curtseying, or in staring about them: but in looking upward and looking inward, in hearkening to the voice of God, and pouring out their hearts before Him.

"It is also no small advantage that the person who reads prayers (though not always the same) yet is always one who may be supposed to speak from his heart; one whose life is no reproach to his profession; and one who performs that solemn part of divine service, not in a careless, hurrying, slovenly manner, but

seriously and slowly, as becomes him who is transacting so high an affair between God and man.

"Nor are their solemn addresses to God interrupted either by the formal drawl of a parish clerk, the screaming of boys, who bawl out what they neither feel nor understand, or the unreasonable and unmeaning impertinence of a voluntary on the organ. When it is seasonable to sing praise to God, they do it with the spirit, and with the understanding also: not in the miserable, scandalous doggrel of Hopkins and Sternhold, but in psalms and hymns which are both sense and poetry; such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian, than a Christian to turn critic. What they sing is therefore a proper continuation of the spiritual and reasonable service; being selected for that end, not by a poor humdrum wretch, who can scarce read what he drones out with such an air of importance, but by one who knows what he is about, and how to connect the preceding with the following part of the service: nor does he take just 'two staves,' but more or less as may best raise the soul to God, especially when sung in well-composed and well-adapted tunes; not by a handful of wild unawakened striplings, but by a whole serious congregation; and then not lolling at ease, or in the indecent posture of sitting, drawling out one word after another, but all standing before God, and praising Him lustily, and with a good courage."

P. 258. "*Not in trustees.*"—This is incorrect.—ED.

P. 262. *To detect what was objectionable.*—One of his charges against the Scotch clergy was, that "with pride, bitterness, and bigotry, self-indulgence was joined; self-denial was little taught and practised. It is well if some of them did not despise or even condemn all self-denial in things indifferent, as in apparel or food, as nearly allied to popery."—*Journal*, x., p. 20. And in one of his sermons he says: "There is always a fast day in the week preceding the administration of the Lord's Supper (in Scotland). But occasionally looking into a book of accounts, in one of their vestries, I observed so much set down for the dinners of the ministers on the fast day. And I am informed there is the same article in them all. And is there any doubt but that the people fast just as their ministers do! But what a farce is this! what a miserable burlesque upon a plain Christian duty!"—*Works*, vol. x., p. 419.

P. 263. *More liberal.*—The meeting-house at Athlone was built and given, with the ground on which it stood, by a single gentleman. In Cork, one person, Mr. Thomas Jones, gave between three and four hundred pounds towards the preaching-house. Towards that in Dublin, Mr. Lunell gave four hundred pounds. I know no such benefactors among the Methodists in England."—*Journal*, xvi., p. 23.

P. 265. *Mrs. Vazeille's fortune.*—Stated to have been £10,000. —ED.

P. 267. *Wesley's separation from his wife.*—The separation between Mr. and Mrs. Wesley is represented by all his biographers as final. Yet, in his Journal for the ensuing year, 1772, she is mentioned as travelling with him: "Tuesday, June 30. Calling at a little inn on the moors, I spoke a few words to an old man there, as my wife did to the woman of the house. They both appeared to be deeply affected. Perhaps Providence sent us to this house for the sake of those two poor souls."

P. 269. *His father.*—"A thousand times," says he, "have I found my father's words true: 'You may have peace with the Dissenters, if you do not so humour them as to dispute with them. But if you do, they will *out-face* and *out-lung* you; and, at the end, you will be where you were at the beginning.'"

P. 272. *Some personal charges.*—On this point it is proper to state, that he does justice to the bishop in his Journal. For when he notices that, calling upon the person who was named as the accuser, she told him readily and repeatedly, that she "never saw or knew any harm of him," he adds, "yet I am not sure that she has not said just the contrary to others. If so, she, not I, must give account for it to God."

P. 334. *Wesley's weight.*—"In the year 1769," he says, "I weighed a hundred and twenty-two pounds. In 1783, I weighed not a pound more or less."

P. 342. *Wesley's doctrine concerning riches.*—Upon this subject Mr. Wesley has preserved a fine anecdote. "Beware," he says, "of forming a hasty judgement concerning the fortune of others. There may be secrets in the situation of a person which few but God are acquainted with. Some years since, I told a gentleman, Sir, I am afraid you are covetous. He asked me, What is the reason of your fears? I answered, A year ago, when I made a collection for the expense of repairing the Foundry, you subscribed five guineas. At the subscription made this year you subscribed only half-a-guinea. He made no reply; but after a time asked, Pray, Sir, answer me a question: Why do you live upon potatoes? (I did so between three and four years.) I replied, It has much conduced to my health. He answered, I believe it has. But did you not do it likewise to save money? I said, I did, for what I save from my own meat will feed another that else would have none. But, Sir, said he, if this be your motive, you may save much more. I know a man that goes to the market at the beginning of every week. There he buys a pennyworth of parsnips, which he boils in a large quantity of water. The parsnips serve

him for food, and the water for drink the ensuing week, so his meat and drink together cost him only one penny a week. This he constantly did, though he had then two hundred pounds a year, to pay the debts which he had contracted before he knew God!—And this was he whom I had set down for a covetous man."

To this affecting anecdote I add an extract from Wesley's Journal, relating to the subject of property:—

"In the evening one sat behind me in the pulpit at Bristol, who was one of our first masters at Kingswood. A little after he left the school, he likewise left the Society. Riches then flowed in upon him; with which, having no relations, Mr. Spencer designed to do much good—after his death. *But God said unto him, Thou fool!* Two hours after he died intestate, and left all his money to be scrambled for.

"Reader! if you have not done it already, *make your will before you sleep.*"—*Journal*, xix. 8.

I know a person who, upon reading this passage, took the advice.

P. 342. *Lying in state.*—Moore, who was an eye-witness, states that there was "no truth at all in the account. He had no clerical cap, old or new, in his possession, and his friends had too much sense to put anything into the hands of a corpse."—ED.

P. 342. *The Crowds.*—Estimated at 10,000 persons.—ED.

P. 342. *Mr. Richardson.*—He preached a funeral sermon later in the day.—ED.

P. 342. *Mr. Wesley's epitaphs.*

ON THE TOMB-STONE.

To the Memory of
THE VENERABLE JOHN WESLEY, A.M.
Late Fellow of LINCOLN College, OXFORD.
This GREAT LIGHT arose
(By the singular Providence of God)
To enlighten THESE NATIONS,
And to *revive*, *enforce*, and *defend*,
The Pure, Apostolical DOCTRINES and PRACTICES of
THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH:
Which he continued to do, by his WRITINGS and his
LABOURS,
For more than HALF A CENTURY:
And, to his inexpressible Joy,
Not only beheld their INFLUENCE extending,
And their EFFICACY witnessed,
In the Hearts and Lives of MANY THOUSANDS,
As well in the WESTERN WORLD as in these
KINGDOMS:
But also, far above all human Power or Expectation,

Lived to see PROVISION made by the singular GRACE of GOD
For their CONTINUANCE and ESTABLISHMENT,
TO THE JOY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS!
READER, if thou art constrained to bless the INSTRUMENT,
GIVE GOD THE GLORY!

After having languished a few days, he at length finished his COURSE *and his* LIFE *together; gloriously triumphing over* DEATH, *March 2. An. Dom.* 1791, *in the Eighty-eighth Year Of his Age.*

IN THE CHAPEL.

Sacred to the Memory
Of the *Rev.* JOHN WESLEY, M.A.
Some time *Fellow of* LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.
A Man, in Learning and sincere Piety,
Scarcely inferior to any:
In Zeal, Ministerial Labours, and extensive Usefulness,
Superior (perhaps) to all Men
Since the days of ST. PAUL.
Regardless of Fatigue, personal Danger, and Disgrace,
He went out into the highways and hedges,
Calling Sinners to Repentance,
And Preaching the GOSPEL of Peace.
He was the Founder of the *Methodist* Societies;
The Patron and *Friend* of the Lay Preachers,
By whose Aid he extended the Plan of Itinerant Preaching
Through GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
The WEST INDIES and AMERICA,
With unexampled Success.
He was born June 17th, 1703,
And died March 2d, 1791,
In sure and certain hope of Eternal Life,
Through the Atonement and Mediation of a Crucified Saviour.
He was sixty-five Years in the *Ministry*,
And fifty-two an Itinerant Preacher:
He lived to see, in these KINGDOMS only,
About Three hundred Itinerant,
And a Thousand *Local* Preachers,
Raised up from the midst of his own People;
And Eighty thousand Persons in the Societies under his Care.
His *Name* will ever be had in grateful Remembrance
By all who rejoice in the universal Spread
Of the Gospel of CHRIST.
Soli Deo Gloria.

This epitaph has been altered. "He was the Founder," etc., now reads: "He was the Founder of the Methodist Societies, and the chief Promoter and Patron of the Plan of Itinerant Preaching." There is also the superscription:

"The best of all is, God is with us."

Wesley's coffin bore the inscription:

IOHANNES WESLEY, A.M.
OLIM. SOC. COLL. LIN. OXON.
OB. 2D. DIE. MARTII, 1791.
AN. ÆT. 88.

Wesley was buried in the middle of the graveyard behind the City Road Chapel. The vault being opened, in 1828, the coffin was discovered to be decayed, and a new oak coffin was made and deposited in a stone sarcophagus. In 1871 a marble tablet, with medallion portraits of John and Charles Wesley, was placed in the south aisle of Westminster Abbey. It has this superscription, "The best of all is, God is with us." Beneath the portraits, Wesley is represented as preaching on his father's tomb at Epworth, and below are the legends: "I look upon all the world as my parish," and "God buries His workmen, but carries on the work." At the centenary of Wesley's death, March 2, 1891, a statue by Mr. Adams Acton, in front of the chapel, was unveiled. —ED.

EXTRACTS FROM ALEXANDER KNOX'S REMARKS.

Character of John Wesley.—It will hardly be denied that, even in this frail and corrupted world, we sometimes meet persons who, in their very mien and aspect, as well as in the whole habit of life, manifest such a stamp and signature of virtue as to make our judgment of them a matter of intuition, rather than a result of continued examination. I never met a human being who came more perfectly within this description than John Wesley. It was impossible to converse with him, I might say, to look at him, without being persuaded, not only that his heart and mind were animated with the purest and most exalted goodness, but that the instinctive bent of his nature accorded so congenially with his Christian principles,

as to give a pledge for his practical consistency in which it was impossible not to place confidence.

* * * * *

In estimating John Wesley, I am not conscious of partiality. For his singularities, as a public teacher, I had no predilection. I loved and revered him for his cheerful piety, his resistless amiability, and his perfect superiority to every vulgar feeling and selfish motive. But I was not blind to his weaknesses, nor to the important defects and liabilities of his religious system. Still, the more deeply I have reflected, the more disposed have I been to regard him as an instrument of Providence for most valuable purposes; and, whatever may have been his misconceptions in intellect, or his errors in conduct, my conviction is that he never consciously swerved from what he considered his "heavenly calling."

Wesley's conduct in the affair of Dr. Coke.—Nothing, surely, could have evinced pure weakness of mind more clearly than the strange business of making Dr. Coke a bishop. That Dr. C. urged Mr. Wesley to this proceeding, I know with certainty from the doctor himself; and full acquaintance with this well-meaning but very inconsiderate man, makes me feel that Mr. Wesley could scarcely have had a more unfortunate adviser. The argument by which Mr. Wesley brought himself to comply with Dr. C.'s wish, is itself an evidence that his reasoning faculty had greatly failed. I need not point out his childish misapprehension of the case in question, as it has been noticed and justly remarked upon by Mr. Southey. At the same time, I do not wonder that Mr. Wesley's conduct in this instance should be thought to bespeak the duplicity rather than the infirmity of his mind, and that Mr. Southey should accordingly suppose Dr. Coke's express assumption of the episcopate in America to have called forth only "a semblance of displeasure from Mr. Wesley, merely intended to save appearances;" and yet would fain hope that, if Mr. Southey will take the trouble of referring to the lately published edition of Moore's Life of Wesley, from the 335th to the 345th page of the second volume, and particularly the letter to Mr. Asbury, he will see that Mr. Wesley's displeasure, however inconsistent, was not feigned, but actually and strongly felt by him.

It would be impossible for Mr. Southey to condemn the measures into which Mr. Wesley was betrayed more cordially than I did at the time, and continue to do to the present moment. But the question most important to Mr. Wesley's moral character is, whether he was led captive by the solicitations of others, acting upon the assailable points of his then debilitated mind, or whether, from an ambitious desire to consolidate his community, and perpetuate his name, he was induced to sink the long-maintained character of an evangelist in that of a wily and sinuous politician.

This latter supposition Mr. Southey has felt himself obliged, I am sure most reluctantly, to entertain. . . .

That such, to every appearance, is the natural construction of Mr. Wesley's conduct, I regret to acknowledge; and nothing short of my personal acquaintance with Mr. Wesley, and my actual attention at the time to the transactions in question, would authorise me to dispute its justness. [To Charles Wesley, who highly disapproved of his brother's conduct, the following epigram is attributed :—

"How easy now are bishops made
At man or woman's whim;
Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid,
But who laid hands on *him*?"—ED.]

Wesley on the Christian priesthood.—When Mr. Wesley was in Ireland, in the year 1789, at a distance from prejudiced advisers, and amongst persons cordially attached to the Church of England, he composed a sermon on Hebrews v. 4, which he published twelve months after, in the *Arminian Magazine*, containing as energetic a testimony as could be expressed in language against separation from the Church, and assumption by his preachers of the priestly office. . . . Fully aware that there was an ambition amongst his preachers to assume the ministerial office, he tells them: "Ye never dreamed of this for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, *seek the priesthood also.* Ye knew, *no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*" He then proceeds: "O! contain yourselves within your own bounds. Be content with preaching the Gospel. I earnestly advise you, abide in your place; keep your own station. Ye were fifty years ago, those of you who were then Methodist preachers, extraordinary messengers of God, not going in your own will, but thrust out, not to supersede, but to provoke to jealousy the ordinary messengers. In God's name stop there. Ye yourselves were at first called in the Church of England; and though ye have, and will have, a thousand temptations to leave it, and set up for yourselves, regard them not. Be Church-of-England men still. Do not cast away the peculiar glory which God hath put upon you, and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up."

Wesley's protest against separation.—"I never," he says, "had any design of separating from the Church; I have no such design now: I do not believe the Methodists in general design it. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event: nevertheless, in spite of all I can do, many will separate from it; although I am inclined to think not one half, perhaps not a third of them. These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a

separate party, which, consequently, will dwindle into a dry, dull, separate party. In flat opposition to these, I declare, once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it."

Wesley and separation.—I need scarcely say that it is only in what regards moral feeling that I am anxious John Wesley should stand acquitted. His affection for the Church of England, I have every reason to know, was unfeigned and cordial; and yet I believe that if, at any time after the formation of his Society, he had been reduced to the alternative of being expelled from the Church, or of relinquishing his system, he would have suffered the former, rather than resolve upon the latter; simply because he conceived that the spiritual benefits conferred on individuals, by means of his Society, were too deep and too extensive to allow that he should abandon it. And yet so much did he deprecate a gratuitous separation, that when, some years before his death, I asked him, in a private conversation, how he should wish his friends to act in case of the Methodists withdrawing from the Established Church, his answer was, I would have them adhere to the Church and leave the Methodists.

It is on the proofs which Mr. Wesley gave to the last of this same feeling every now and then recovering its ascendency, even after he had yielded, and, strange to think, was occasionally still yielding, to contrarious counsels, that I ground my exculpation of him from intentional duplicity. I submit the particular instances to Mr. Southey's consideration: he will judge whether they do not give evidence of a mind at distressing variance with itself, and as incapable of forming any politic design for its own purpose, as of detecting the representations of interested or prejudiced advisers.

The first remarkable instance of the kind to which I allude, occurred more than two years after his first ordination for America. A spirit of decided dissent broke out at Deptford, and Mr. Wesley was urged to allow the Methodists there to hold their Sunday service at Church hours. But he refused compliance, on the ground (Journal, 1st edit., Sept. 24, 1786) that "this would be a formal separation from the Church." "To fix" (our service), he adds, "at the same hour, is obliging them to separate, either from the Church or us; and this I judge to be not only inexpedient, but totally unlawful for me to do." This remonstrance, however, had but a transient effect; for, on the 2nd of January following, his words are: "I went over to Deptford; but it seemed I was go into a den of lions: most of the leading men in the Society were mad for separating from the Church. I endeavoured to reason with them, but in vain; they had neither sense nor even good manners left. At length, after meeting the whole Society, I told them, 'If you are resolved, you may have your service in the Church hours: but, remember, from that time you will see my face no more.' This

struck deep, and from that hour I have heard no more of separation from the Church."

Wesley's doctrine of faith.—Mr. Wesley most probably derived his opinion respecting the effective exertion of faith from the Lutheran system, to which, for a time, he was attached. The Augsburg Confession says that men are justified "coram Deo cum credunt se ingratiam recipi et peccata remitti propter Christum, qui suâ morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit;" and it so happened that in one particular sentence the Homily of Salvation appeared to favour that definition, by describing the true faith of a Christian as a "sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God." Accordingly, of these latter words John Wesley took special hold, and for many years quoted them on all occasions, as expressing the exact doctrine on which he then insisted. At length he became less fond of them; and after his honestly-avowed "return to the plain word," probably never once repeated them.

When, however, he was under the full influence of that Lutheran dogma, it was a natural result in so ardent a mind, that he should urge his penitent disciples to exert a "trust and confidence," on which immediate acceptance with God was thought to depend. So long as he imagined that the two states of Divine wrath and Divine favour were separated as if by a mathematical line, and that the transit from one to the other was to be effected by some sort of mental effort, it followed of course that he should exhort to the making of that effort; nor could he have consistently ceased from this endeavour, until he became persuaded that there was really no such marked transition, as he had supposed, from a state of condemnation to a state of favour: but that "whosoever feared God and wrought righteousness according to his providental light, was at that very moment in a state of acceptance," and consequently that "the wrath of God" no longer abode upon him.

It might indeed seem strange, that when Mr. Wesley went so far, he did not still go farther, and wholly relinquish the notion of that exertion of faith, for which, on his more enlarged principle, there was no longer the same necessity, nor, strictly, the same room. But the progress of his understanding was not proportioned to the expansion of his heart; and instantaneous transitions had entered so deeply into the religious views of his people, that his mere concern for their spiritual safety might have inspired a dread of admitting, even in his own mind, that such transitions were unimportant. What, therefore, he had once insisted on, as the means of passing from a state of wrath to a state of acceptance, he still continued to represent, but certainly with much less intensity, as the best method of advancing from a lower to a higher degree in the spiritual life, or, as he himself termed it, (I should think not

in all respects improperly,) from the condition of a *servant* of God to that of a *child* of God; in other words, from the state of obeying God sincerely and conscientiously, to that of supreme pleasure and delight in His service. Thus it was, that in softening the severity of his former doctrine (without a shade of conscious duplicity), he gave no actual disturbance to the prepossessions of his people. They, on the other hand, expressed no dissatisfaction with his liberalised principles, which probably they did not entirely understand; and they exulted in the triumphs obtained for him over his Calvinistic adversaries by his distinguished auxiliary: but their habits of mind underwent no change; the internal peculiarities of the system, with all their practical consequences, remaining substantially what they had been from the beginning.

Wesley and perfectionism.—Mr. Southey expresses a strong opinion that John Wesley's doctrine of perfection was more dangerous than the Moravian mysticism. On this point it is my wish merely to state facts, in order to enable Mr. Southey, after hearing evidence, to fix the extent of Mr. Wesley's liability to censure.

It is a fact, then, that in one stage of Mr. Wesley's course, he carried the doctrine of religious perfection to such an extreme as to call forth his own subsequent censure and retractation. In a preface to a volume of hymns, published in the year 1741, he made those excessive statements; and to a republication of that preface, in 1777, he appended notes for the purpose of disavowing several of his former positions. Still, however, he retained his persuasion, that that maturity of Christian virtue for which he contended was, though not always, yet in general, suddenly acquired, and that there was a special witness of the Holy Spirit, by which those who attained it were inwardly and immediately assured of its possession. In both which instances, Mr. Wesley appears to have relied exclusively on what he conceived himself to have seen and heard within his own Society. How much he was exposed to delusion by relying on this standard, I have already remarked. But it was a necessary result of that credulity of which Mr. Southey most justly says, that it "was Wesley's peculiar weakness, and he retained it to the last."

It is, however, not the less true, that "as he grew older, cooler, and wiser, he modified and softened down" the doctrine of perfection; but I confess he does not appear to me to have "almost explained it away," but rather to have returned to that notion of it which he could not but know was alone countenanced by the consent of the ancient Fathers, and the most eminent anti-Calvinistic divines of the Church of England.

Some last impressions of Wesley.—I had an opportunity of closely observing him for some days together, in the last year but

one of his life. He was, just then, after a wonderful continuance of natural strength, beginning to "find that he grew old." His sight was much decayed, and he himself was conscious that his memory was weakened, though it did not yet appear in his conversation. Of his own actual feelings under these increasing infirmities, I have an interesting record, in a letter dated *Dublin, April 11th*, 1789, written soon after his last arrival in Ireland, and notifying his intended visit to the place where I resided, and where he was to be my guest. "You see in the public papers," he says, "that I shall be with you, if God permit, on the 30th of next month. If I should be called to go a longer journey before that time, I hope you would be able to say, 'Good is the will of the Lord.' Every time we meet, it is less and less probable that we should meet again in this world; but it is enough if we are counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead."

After receiving such an intimation of conscious decline, I was delighted to find his cheerfulness in no respect abated. It was too obvious that his bodily frame was sinking; but his spirit was as alert as ever; and he was little less the life of the company he happened to be in, than he had been three-and-twenty years before, when I first knew him. I had some motive at that time for stating, in a newspaper publication, the impression which his manner and conversation then particularly made upon me. This sketch of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Henry Moore, his first biographer, inserted, with the alteration of one unimportant word, in his volume; and it was copied both by Mr. Hampson and Dr. Whitehead. Of what I then said, I do not, after the reflection of so many years, retract an iota. Now, as then, I feel it to be a case in which there was no room for delusion. Such unclouded sunshine of the breast, in the deepest winter of age, and on the felt verge of eternity, bespoke a mind whose recollections were as unsullied as its present sensations were serene. It seemed to verify to the letter those weighty words of the Psalmist, "Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last."

Wesley's enthusiasm.—Another charge against Mr. Wesley, I cannot equally dispute, namely, that of enthusiasm. Still he was an enthusiast of no vulgar kind: as Nelson was an enthusiast for his country, so was John Wesley for religion. Where the highest interests of man were concerned, Mr. Wesley made no account of precedent, or public opinion, or maxims of human or even of ecclesiastical prudence. The Church of England appeared to him to have fallen into a state of stupor like that of the ancient Jewish Church; and it was his persuasion that a kind of second John the Baptist, "a voice of one crying in the wilderness," was necessary to awaken it: to this duty he conceived himself providentially

called, and he engaged in it with as firm a purpose as if he had been commissioned by a voice from heaven. But in this material respect John Wesley differed from all vulgar enthusiasts—that he did not imagine any such voice, nor had he the slightest thought of either impulse or intimation from above. Singular as his course was, he no more supposed himself raised above the guidance of his reason than of his conscience; but the premises from which he reasoned frequently derived so much of their shape and colour from the abstracted view which he took of them, and the sanguine spirit in which he regarded them, as to produce results differing perhaps little, in appearance, from those of strict and proper fanaticism; while, in reality, they were only the regular workings of his peculiarly formed and, at the same time, religiously devoted mind. As this remark applies especially to the earlier stages of his career, so, I conceive, its truth is supported by the manner in which experience and reflection led him, in some important instances, to acknowledge the excess, and to correct the severity, of his former doctrinal conceptions.

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